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Saint Paul and his cities

SAINT PAUL AND HIS CITIES

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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LONDON: ELLIOT STOCK

SAINT PAUL AND HIS CITIES

BY

R. W. POUNDER

AUTHOR OF "HISTORICAL NOTES ON THE BOOK OF REVELATION"

LONDON

JAMES CLARKE & CO., 13 & 14, FLEET STREET

1913

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1913

TO

MY FATHER

PREFACE

WORDSWORTH, looking at the picture of Peele Castle in a storm, reflected that at one time he would have wished the hoary pile to be painted in a peaceful landscape, beside a sea that could not cease to smile.

> " A Picture had it been of lasting ease,
> Elysian quiet, without toil or strife :
> No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,
> Or merely silent Nature's breathing life."

But since that time a deep distress had humanized his soul, and he is no longer influenced by the desire to view the castle in such ethereal surroundings.

To most people the events of the first century, so far as they touch Palestine and the beginnings of Christianity, seem to have occurred in a land as remote from reality as that of the poet's fancy. The happenings recorded in the New Testament are surrounded by the visionary atmosphere of some dreamland such as the early Wordsworth would have desired for the picture. The period of the birth of Christianity is regarded as a time of celestial peace, undisturbed by the clash of passions, or the excitement of conflict.

But a period like this has never been known in the history of humanity ; or if one is to be found it must

be sought not in the first century, but in some century of the middle ages, when universal acquiescence and the paralysis of the spirit of inquiry had produced conditions, not indeed of idyllic peace, but of stagnation and corruption.

The first century was not a time when anything was taken for granted. Judaism and the Imperial Religion, not to mention the various cults of paganism, were in possession of the field, and the New Religion had to fight for its very existence. An elementary acquaintance with the New Testament is sufficient to show that Christianity was born in conflict. The most striking resemblance between the twentieth century and the first lies in the fact that to-day, as in primitive times, Christianity has to justify its existence not by the appeal to antiquity or authority, neither of which was of any force in primitive times, but simply by the intrinsic superiority of its teaching and the moral worth of the lives it moulds. This is as it should be. Christianity needs no adventitious aids; when it relies on material props it fails. The Spirit of Christ is the force which renders it irresistible. But the Spirit of Christ guides humanity forward; and there are always classes which prefer to remain in the rear. Hence the great conflict which was waged within the Church in the first century. It fell to the lot of St. Paul to take the leading part in this warfare.

Nothing is more striking than the scanty acquaintance which most Christians possess with the life

of St. Paul. Very few people, except professional historians, read the original documents which are the authorities for the life of Napoleon or the origin of Buddhism. But the original documents relating to the origin of Christianity are read by countless millions of individuals in every language. And yet there are comparatively few people who have a clear idea of the part which was played by St. Paul, or could give a satisfactory account of the significance of his life.

The results of most great lives can be summed up in a few sentences. But there are many members of our congregations who could discuss the position of Wagner in music, or the contribution of Newton to science, but yet would be altogether at a loss if asked to explain what it was that St. Paul achieved by his life.

The present book is designed to meet the needs of the average members of ordinary congregations who may desire to increase their acquaintance with the life of St. Paul. There is a much wider interest in theological subjects than is generally supposed. It has been the author's intention to treat the essential features of the Apostle's career in a simple and non-technical manner. He has wished to arouse interest and to suggest lines of thought ; and if the idea should become clearer to those who may chance to read this book, that St. Paul was a real man, grappling with problems which we have to face to-day under a different aspect, he will feel that his object has been attained.

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SAINT PAUL AND HIS CITIES

I

THE OLD RELIGION AND THE NEW

In the upper room on the last night of His life our Lord took the cup and handed it to His disciples with the words, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is shed for many." Only a very slight proportion of modern readers can appreciate the startling significance which these words, familiar to us to-day, possessed for the men who first heard them. The company assembled in the upper room was composed of Jews without exception, and the word "covenant" was associated with the religious teaching of their earliest years. To a Jew in the first century, "covenant" conveyed the same meaning as "religion" does to a man in the twentieth. The whole Mosaic system was based on the covenant which God made with Israel through the medium of the shepherd-prophet when the people were redeemed from Egypt; and this covenant, as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews does not fail to remind us, was inaugurated by means of the blood of sacrifices (Heb. ix. 18—22). So that the whole Jewish conception of religion was bound up

with the idea of a covenant or compact between God on the one side and Israel on the other, ratified and assured by sacrifice.

As the centuries rolled on their course a higher conception of religion was evolved among the Israelites, and the popular ideas on the subject proved entirely inadequate to satisfy the spiritual aspirations which were engendered by the great outburst of prophecy in the eighth century before Christ. This period was specially marked by a recrudescence of the conflict, which has never died out of human society, between the priest and the prophet, the man of a system and the man of intuition. All the prophets who were called forth by this struggle—Isaiah, Jeremiah, and even the priest-prophet Ezekiel—were fierce in their denunciations of the practical evils which had resulted from the exclusive pursuit of the priestly ideal. Jeremiah is courageous enough to express in so many words his conviction that the Mosaic system as it was known in his day was destined to pass away; and that its place would be occupied by a new covenant which God would make with His people. The passage is so highly important that it must be quoted in full: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. But this is the covenant that I will make with them after those

days, saith the Lord: I will put my law in their inward parts and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity and their sin will I remember no more" (Jer. xxxi. 31—34).

The scene in the twenty-fourth chapter of Exodus when the first covenant was inaugurated, and the declaration of Jeremiah that this covenant was to be abrogated and another instituted, were in our Lord's mind when He spoke the solemn words at the institution of the memorial supper. The Holy Communion was founded as the symbol of the new covenant or the new religion. The word "religion," being a Latin word, was naturally unknown to the Jews, and of course does not occur in the Bible, which is entirely written in Hebrew and Greek; but the idea of relationship to God which the word "religion" expresses was more familiar to them than to any other nation of antiquity, and the word which they used to express this relationship was "covenant." The choice of the word "testament" by the translators of the Authorized Version as the English equivalent of the Hebrew or Greek word for "covenant" is one of the most unfortunate mistakes ever made in the history of translation. It is a Latin word (and therefore of course unknown to the Jews) which means "will," and is the most

entirely suitable expression which could possibly have been selected had it been the object of the translators to disguise the meaning which our Lord wished to convey. The word He used was "covenant," not "testament"; and the word "covenant" conveyed to Him and to all who were present exactly the same ideas as are suggested in modern language by the word "religion." When this fact is firmly grasped the real significance of the scene in the upper room at once becomes apparent. At the most solemn moment of His life, and in the most affecting manner, He declares that Judaism, the religion in which all present had been brought up, is passing away, and that He is the victim whose sacrifice would introduce the new religion which was destined to take its place.

The title of the Bible also is completely robbed of significance for an English reader by the intrusion of this word "testament." The proper translation should run "the old covenant" and "the new covenant"; or, bearing in mind what the word "covenant" signified to a Jew, and using the word which would convey this signification to a reader at the present day, the real title of the two parts of the Bible should run "The Book of the Old Religion" and "The Book of the New Religion."

The scene which we have just considered took place in Palestine, one of the most backward countries of the Empire. The Roman Empire extended from the Pillars of Hercules on the west (one of them is now known as the Rock of Gibraltar)

to the Indies in the east. In the centre lay the Mediterranean. The coast of Palestine was one of the most inhospitable on the whole Mediterranean littoral. There was nothing but a small fishing port called Strato's Tower in existence south of Ptolemais until Herod the Great took and transformed it into the magnificent city and harbour which he did not omit to call Cæsarea out of compliment to his imperial patron. It was in this isolated country that the New Religion was promulgated to a handful of adherents, one of whom was a traitor and not one of whom understood. There was not a man in that room who had lived beyond the borders of Palestine ; all their ideas were associated with that small piece of territory—they knew nothing of the countries and nations outside.

This brings us to a consideration of the point in which the New Religion differed most decisively from the old. It was to be the religion of all the nations ; whereas Judaism was the religion of the Jews alone. It is perfectly true that foreigners attached themselves to the Mosaic system, but they did so on terms of inferiority, as proselytes, and could never attain the same standing in the covenant which the Jew enjoyed by right of birth. The Book of Jonah, now unfortunately popularly remembered only by the story of the great fish, the least important part of its contents, was in reality a noble-minded protest against this narrow, particularist tendency of Judaism. The teaching it embodies is that the Ninevites are every whit as much the objects of

God's peculiar care as the Jews, who styled themselves exclusively the chosen people, and were apt to regard God's favour to themselves as a token of the inferiority of other nationalities.

But the New Religion which our Lord inaugurated on the last night of His earthly life was to be the religion of all the nations. Its spirit was to be catholic or comprehensive. The Master's eye saw the fields white already unto harvest; His mind was occupied with the "other sheep" which were one day to enter the fold; His last command to His followers was to go and make disciples of all the nations. This was the point in which the two systems differed fundamentally, and it was this fact which rendered it vain to cherish the hope of a reconciliation between the old and the new. Our Lord saw clearly the impracticability of galvanizing Judaism into a new life by means of Christianity; and He has embodied His opinion in a saying which is so clear as to place His meaning beyond reach of misunderstanding. In two of the most striking and homely of the parabolic sayings He insisted that there was no method by which an agreement could be arrived at between the Law and the Gospel. Christianity must never be a patch on the old garment of Judaism, and it was impossible for the new wine of the Spirit to be poured into the old legalistic and Levitical bottles (Mark ii. 18—22).

The incompatibility of the two systems is abundantly illustrated by the events of our Lord's life. It was because His standpoint was new that

He was such a passionate and uncompromising critic of the religious life of His day. Both in parable and in direct speech He denounces the people who were prominent in religious circles; while they drew attention to their own respectability and piety by stigmatizing Him as a companion of the disreputable. The thought of their formalism, and of the misrepresentation of God of which they were guilty, roused Him to the deepest anger. The flaming words of the twenty-third chapter of St. Matthew, words of scorn such as He never used to sinners, will show how fiercely His wrath burned against those who neglected Humanity while they professed to served God.

He displays the same fearlessness in dealing with the sacred writings which in the name of reverence had been robbed of life and meaning. In one word He sweeps away whole sections of the Book of Leviticus on which the Temple system was based. "This he said, making all meats clean" (Mark vii. 19, R.V.). Dealing with the giving of the Law His words are, "It was said to them of old time, but I say unto you" (Matt. v. 21). His independent attitude towards the letter of the scripture filled them with fury.

The multitudes who were outside the influence of the official religion of Palestine were the peculiar care of Christ. They had no shepherd. The system of religion established in the country, with the Temple for its centre, took little thought for the poor and helpless. This did not mean that the spirit of

true religion had ceased to exist among the people : it did mean that the authorities who controlled the system of the day were far more interested in preserving their power than in caring for the masses of the population. There is nothing which is so quickly recognized as kindness and love. This was the secret of Christ.

The condition of the Jewish religion in Palestine at the beginning of the first century seemed to our Lord to be deplorable. But the spirit of false religion has never departed from humanity, has never been banished from the Church of Christ. Wherever there is the element of selfishness, narrowness, bigotry, the tendency to magnify differences and overlook points of agreement, the dark brow of suspicion, sectarianism, hostility, contempt, treachery, there we have the spirit against which Christ fought during His life, and the spirit which ultimately achieved His death. In His own spirit there is nothing but what is fair, kind and good. If Christians were really possessed by His broad, comprehensive and catholic spirit, His cause would be triumphant.

But although our Lord showed Himself such a determined critic of the religious views of His day, we should fall into a grievous mistake if we imagined that the spirit of true religion had fled from Palestine during this period. It lingered in homes like His own in Nazareth, or that of Lazarus, Mary and Martha in Bethany ; while in the first two chapters of St. Luke's Gospel we breathe the very

atmosphere of simple, vital, religion. Christ recognized and lived in this element, but He was not prepared for its sake to tolerate the mass of evil by which it was almost stifled. These, however, were private and humble people; it was the public and official side of Judaism which drew down our Master's unsparing condemnation. Had His criticism been less damaging He would not have been crucified.

It stands out clearly, then, throughout the Gospel narrative that the spirit of our Lord could not be reconciled with the spirit of Judaism; and it was evident that the New Religion which He promulgated in the hours before His agony would be completely unlike anything with which the disciples had become acquainted in the official religion of the country. This was what He meant when He said that the wine represented the Blood in which the New Covenant or Religion would be established.

The New Religion was to be the religion of Humanity. How then was it to be separated from Judaism, the religion of a nation? When our Lord spoke and for many years afterwards, the story of His Life and Death was hidden away in Palestine. How was the good news which brought salvation to be conveyed to the nations of the Empire? The Book of the Acts of the Apostles was written to answer these questions. Its subject is the evangelization of the Roman Empire. As we read the book we become conscious of the fact that there were two classes of Jews; and that it is impossible

to understand the early history of Christianity except the distinction between the two classes is clearly recognized.

The disciples to whom our Lord spoke in the upper room were Palestinian Jews. They had been brought up within the limits of the Holy Land and had never travelled outside its borders. It is true that they were, with the exception of Judas, men of Galilee; and therefore much more free from the deadening influence of ecclesiastical tradition than the men of Jerusalem. But they belonged to the class of Jews who had never been abroad. The Jews of the other class, who play such a decisive part in the history of early Christianity, were Jews of the Dispersion. This title may be seen by English readers at the beginning of James and 1 Peter, in the Revised Version. All the Jews who were born and lived in foreign lands were called Jews of the Dispersion. The passing of the New Religion to the Gentiles was one of the decisive events in the world's history; and since it was mainly carried out by this class of foreign Jews, it becomes important for readers of the New Testament to have some clear ideas about them.

There were several branches of the Dispersion, the most ancient being the Babylonian. After the captivity in Babylon it was only the poorer sort of the people who returned to Palestine, as is related in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Their wealthier brethren had settled among the vast populations of the Tigris and Euphrates country,

whither they had been transplanted; and, having established business and other connections, were unwilling to undergo the experience of being uprooted a second time. With the coming of Alexander the Great, Jews settled in Asia Minor in great numbers, and the Seleucid kings who succeeded to this part of his dominions were much given to the practice of introducing colonies of Jews into their cities. A very important section of the Dispersion, and one which included many wealthy and highly-cultured members, was that of Africa, with its headquarters in Alexandria. The Dispersion at Rome dates from the time when Jerusalem was captured by Pompey.

By the first century there was a colony of Jews with a synagogue to be found in almost every important city of the Empire. They attracted much attention by reason of the peculiarity of their religious observances, and were, as a rule, thoroughly disliked by their fellow citizens. The Jews of the Dispersion were very unlike their brethren of Palestine. It was quite impossible in a foreign country to observe the law of Moses in its integrity. The freer life of the great cities, and contact with Greek philosophy, insensibly broadened the outlook of many of these foreign Jews. Some of them might even have been found who were prepared to accept the revolutionary idea that it was not incumbent on every son of Adam to embrace the Jewish religion; or the still wilder thought that Judaism might one day pass away, and its place be taken by

a religion founded on a more complete revelation of God. To a Palestinian Jew ideas such as these would seem a jumble of heresy, blasphemy and insanity. It is evident, then, that the future of Christianity, the New Religion, lay with the Jews of the Dispersion ; and the Book of the Acts shows that every critical step in this epoch-making evolutionary process was due to the intervention of Greek-speaking Jews.

The Church of Christ, which was the product of this evolutionary, or, as the Jews considered it, revolutionary process, has often seemed in the present as well as other centuries to be possessed by the spirit of Judaism. No doubt the unspiritual element will never be completely eradicated. But the vision of men to-day is trained to detect the difference between true and false religion. Christianity is the religion of unending progress towards a spiritual ideal. Its content is inexhaustible, therefore it is the religion for the twentieth century. Everything that is unprogressive, partizan, selfish or unspiritual, is not of Christ. When the false element has been more completely winnowed out of the Church, and an advance in the spirit and power of Christ becomes possible, then her appeal will be irresistible. It must be our settled conviction that the Church of Christ should be the home of evolutionary advance, since the most sacred of her sacraments, the Holy Communion, was instituted by her Master as the symbol of progress.

II

TARSUS

It would be impossible to imagine a more strongly marked contrast than that which exists between the surroundings in which the Apostle of the Gentiles and his Master spent the early years of their lives. The greater part of our Lord's life was passed in the peaceful village of Nazareth, which hung on the slope of a hill which looked southwards to Mount Tabor across the celebrated plain of Esdraelon. This valley by which the Prince of Peace had His abode was haunted by memories which were far from peaceful. By the configuration of the country it was marked out to be the battlefield of Palestine. From the times of the Book of Judges down to the dawn of the nineteenth century it has been the scene of sanguinary and decisive conflicts. Here the heroine of the early Israelitish story, like the German women who excited the admiration of Tacitus, did battle with the foes of her country (Judges iv. 6). Here the good king Josiah lost his life in circumstances so calamitous that the mourning passed into a national memory (2 Kings xxiii. 29; Zech. xii. 11). In this valley again, Crusaders launched the long-lanced battle against the Saracens; and here it was also that Napoleon

fought the battle of Mount Tabor against the Arabs at that period of his career when his dreams of founding an eastern Empire were wrecked by Nelson and the Nile, and Sir Sidney Smith and St. Jean d'Acre.

But the peace of the valley was not disturbed by any echo of war during our Lord's lifetime. Forty years after His death were to pass ere the slopes of Tabor again re-echoed to the din of arms, when, during the cruel times of the Jewish war, desperate patriots flung themselves in vain against the invincible legions of Rome. In the seclusion of the hills which bounded this plain to the north, our Lord grew to manhood. He who was to mould the destinies of humanity in such a fashion as has never been done by another, limited Himself to the society of a country village. Even in the days of His public ministry He showed but little interest in such large towns as Palestine possessed. They were few. Cæsarea, the Roman capital on the coast, lay in a district which He never visited. He did not care to visit Jerusalem, the ancient capital of the country, except on such rare occasions as could not well be avoided.

St. Paul, on the other hand, was entirely a man of the city. He was born in a city which was an important centre of commerce, the seat of a celebrated university, and a metropolis. Tarsus was the capital of Cilicia. The country, it is true, did not bear a very enviable reputation. Cilicia, Cappodocia, and Crete are termed, in a common

saying of the day, the three worst K's of the Empire, this being the letter with which the three names begin in Greek. St. Paul, who in one of his letters refers to the popular view of Crete, must have been well aware of the low estimation in which his native country was held (Titus i. 12).

But the capital city seems to have escaped the odium which attached to the country. It was one of the great centres of education on the Mediterranean coastline, and shared with Athens and Alexandria the distinction of being one of the most celebrated university towns in the Empire. The principal difference between them was that, whereas strangers flocked to the other two cities, Tarsus was mainly occupied with the education of her own sons, who, when they had completed their course in her schools were to be found established as teachers in every city throughout the Empire, particularly in Rome. The tutors of the imperial family were selected from her students.

The vast amount of commerce which passed through the city and harbour made it a place of importance from a more material point of view; and indeed St. Paul refers to himself, with that air of negligent depreciation which conceals a pardonable pride, as a citizen of no mean city (Acts xxi. 39).

Cilicia, the country of which Tarsus was the capital, was situated on the northern side of the right angle which the southern coastline of Asia Minor makes with the coast of Syria and Palestine

at the eastern end of the Mediterranean. A glance at a map will show that it is cut off from the bulk of Asia Minor and thrown into the arms of Syria by the mountain range of the Taurus. It was owing to this geographical peculiarity that in the organisation of the Empire the country was joined with Syria and Palestine to form the vast combined province of Syria and Cilicia. Communication with the interior of Asia Minor was maintained by the celebrated pass known as the Cilician Gates. The road to the south went round the foot of Mount Amanus by way of the Syrian Gates.

Armies on the march through Asia Minor kept as a rule to the north of the Taurus range. It is to the fact that this route was not always adhered to that we owe some of the notices of Tarsus which have been preserved by history. It was in the year 400 B.C., when Asia Minor was still entirely subject to the sway of the Persian Empire, that the younger Cyrus set out on his historic march to Babylon, to dethrone his brother Artaxerxes. The starting point of the expedition was Miletus, the city in which St. Paul, hundreds of years later, delivered his pathetic address to the Ephesian elders (Acts xx.). Naturally the bulk of the army was composed of Orientals; but there was a considerable contingent of Greek mercenaries, and with these there marched, as a volunteer, Xenophon, a pupil of Socrates, who, after the disastrous end of the undertaking, led his countrymen back to the sea, and subsequently wrote the history of the ill-starred expedition. On

the march to the East the army entered Cilicia, through the defiles of the Cilician Gates, and Xenophon informs his readers that the Tarsus of his day was a populous and prosperous city.

The battle of the Granicus was fought in 334 B.C., not far from Troas, a town which is of the greatest importance in the life of St. Paul. By this victory Alexander the Great dealt his first mighty blow at the Persian Empire, and became master of Asia Minor. City after city opened its gates to the conqueror, and in due course his progress through the country brought him to Tarsus. Here he bathed in the icy waters of the Cydnus, which had not yet lost the chill of the Taurus snows, and induced an attack of fever which almost cost him his life. The story in connection with this illness is known to everybody. A letter was brought to Alexander which stated that his physician, Philip, had been bribed by the Persian Emperor Darius to administer poison to his royal patient. Alexander handed the letter to the physician and at the same moment swallowed the medicine which had just been prepared. His second great battle against the Persians was fought at Issus, in the neighbourhood of Tarsus.

The Macedonian Empire of Alexander went the way of the Persian Empire of Darius, and when we meet Tarsus again, Rome is the power which is predominant in the East; and the city in which St. Paul was born plays the leading part in a story which has never since lost its hold on the imagination

of men. In 64 B.C. Cilicia was constituted a Roman province, with Tarsus for its capital. Twenty years afterwards, in 42, Antony came to Tarsus after the battle of Philippi, in which he had routed the forces of Brutus, and for ever destroyed the hopes of the republican party. The conduct of Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt, in these perilous times had called down upon her the grave displeasure of the Triumvirs, and Antony summoned her from Alexandria to give an account of her behaviour. It was in Tarsus, then, that Antony first saw the woman for whose sake he threw away an Empire. The dazzling procession of her flotilla up the Cydnus, the Queen herself attired as Venus, has been described in "Antony and Cleopatra" by Shakespeare, who has turned the prose story of Plutarch into masterly verse.

"The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne,
Burn'd on the water: the poop was beaten gold;
Purple the sails, and so perfumed that
The winds were love-sick with them; the oars were silver;
Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made
The water, which they beat, to follow faster,
As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,
It beggar'd all description: she did lie
In her pavilion (cloth of gold of tissue),
O'er-picturing that Venus where we see
The fancy outwork nature; on each side her
Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
With divers-colour'd fans, whose wind did seem
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
And what they undid, did. . . . The city cast

Her people out upon her ; and Antony,
Enthron'd i' the market-place, did sit alone,
Whistling to the air ; which, but for vacancy,
Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too,
And made a gap in nature."

When the end came at Actium, and she chose death rather than the indignity of a Roman triumph, it is not the Styx with its gloomy ferryman which is present to her mind. Her thoughts revert to the earlier scene, and her cry is

" I am again for Cydnus,
To meet Mark Antony."

Although the city declared for Antony in the civil war which broke out between him and Octavian (Augustus), after the other Triumvir, Lepidus, had been disposed of, yet, after his ruin, it was treated with consideration by the victor, partly no doubt because it was the residence of one of his tutors.

It was about forty years after these occurrences that Saul was born in Tarsus. The stirring events which accompanied the overthrow of the Republic and the establishment of the Empire were not more distant from the men of the day than is the Franco-German war from us. Supposing that Saul left Tarsus at the age of thirteen, he was not too young to have become acquainted with the main outline of these great movements, and particularly the part which was taken in them by his own city.

It will be gathered from what has been said that the population of Tarsus was very mixed. The

people of the land were Orientals, and found themselves quite at home under the Persian rule. The Jewish people were also Orientals, and had, like the inhabitants of Asia Minor, been the subjects of the Persian Empire in the days of its glory (2 Chron. xxxvi. 22). But the advent of the Greeks, who were Westerns, involved the introduction of a fresh civilization and another language. New aims and ideals were the necessary outcome of government by a foreign nation. By far the most important change wrought by the march of Alexander was the introduction of the Greek language throughout the East. It became the universal tongue. The Jews were not less affected by the change than other Oriental nations. About two to three hundred years before the birth of Christ it was found necessary to translate the Hebrew scriptures of the Old Testament into Greek for the benefit of those Jews who lived abroad in the Greek-speaking cities of the Macedonian Empire. This version of the Old Testament, known as the Septuagint or the LXX., was made at Alexandria, and is of course the form in which the Old Testament is generally used and quoted by St. Paul, who was a Greek-speaking Jew.

After the inundation of the East by Greek influences, there came Rome, with its vigorous administration of a vast Empire by means of the provincial system, rigorously controlled by the central government from the capital. The peculiar type of civilization which was the outcome of these influences is known as the Græco-Roman civilization,

and it is to this we are introduced in the New Testament. A knowledge of these facts enables us to understand how a man like St. Paul, who possessed the Roman citizenship, used the Greek language even when writing to the capital city.

The resemblances which exist between passages in St. Paul's writings and the teachings of Stoicism have constantly attracted attention. It has sometimes been supposed that the Apostle had actually met his great contemporary, Seneca. The points of contact in teaching are so numerous that there is in existence a fictitious correspondence between the Apostle and the Philosopher which shows that at an early time the similarities were explained on the supposition of the personal acquaintance of the two celebrated teachers. But there is no need to have recourse to such a hypothesis; neither was there anything in common between the prominent courtier who had been the tutor of Nero, and the wandering Jewish teacher.

It would have been impossible for St. Paul to live in the first century and remain unacquainted with the tenets of Stoicism, which was the religion of the nobler spirits under the Empire. But the beginning of his knowledge of this philosophy may perhaps be traced back to Tarsus, and the early years in which the most indelible impressions are made upon the mind. Plato in "The Republic" describes the ideal form of government as one in which the control of the State is vested in philosophers. It is a distinguishing feature of the history of Tarsus that

it is the city in which this theory was actually put to a practical test.

Athenodorus, the tutor of Augustus, was a Stoic philosopher. He was also, like St. Paul, a native of Tarsus. When his royal pupil passed from his control he returned to his native city and took charge of its government. He proved that a philosopher could be a practical man of affairs by banishing the professional politicians who had plundered the city, and introducing a system of enlightened municipal government. He was succeeded in his office by another philosopher, Nestor, who, like his namesake in Homer, was remarkable for the advanced age to which he lived. He was ninety-two when he died. The chronology of the lives of these philosophic and energetic governors has not been accurately ascertained; but the influence of Athenodorus began in 29 B.C., and their rule must almost certainly have persisted till some years after the birth of Christ. The memory of these enlightened rulers and the immunities they secured for the city they governed, would have been fresh in the recollection of the citizens of Saul's day, and would have impressed itself on the memory of the growing boy. In his young days at Tarsus the Stoic philosophy was in the air, and when he became a man he found that it was the religion of the best citizens of the Empire.

Amid the many races and creeds which flourished in Tarsus there was a colony of the Jews. Similar colonies were to be found in all the important cities

of the Empire. The colony at Tarsus had probably originated in Macedonian days, for it was in the time of Alexander that the Jews first migrated from their native land in considerable numbers. The Seleucid kings of Antioch who succeeded to this part of Alexander's dominions frequently deported Jews from Palestine to various cities under their sway ; for the Jews were regarded as industrious and law-abiding citizens. The Jewish colony at Tarsus would not have been very large ; so far as concerned its proportion to the whole population of the city it would resemble the French or German colony in a busy English town. The Jews were debarred from social intercourse with their fellow citizens owing to the peculiarities of their religious customs ; and the social as well as religious centre of the colony was the synagogue. Asia Minor was not like Palestine. In Palestine there was but one religion, Judaism ; in the cities of Asia Minor Judaism was simply one of the bewildering variety of cults.

We have no knowledge of St. Paul's parents, nor has any information reached us as to the circumstances in which they took up their abode in the city on the banks of the Cydnus. Both his father and mother were of unmixed Hebraic descent ; there was no drop of Gentile blood in St. Paul's veins ; he was, as he expressed it in later life, " a Hebrew of Hebrews " (Phil. iii. 5). The most important fact we know about his father is that he enjoyed the Roman citizenship which he transmitted to his son (Acts xxii. 28) ; but we are quite in the dark as to

how the franchise was obtained. It has been suggested that he had been a freedman in some influential family at Rome ; or that he had rendered some signal service to the Imperial party during the civil wars. The family belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, and no doubt the choice of the boy's Hebrew name was inspired by tribal memories of the warrior hero, Saul, the first king of Israel.

The boy who lived in Tarsus was quick to respond to all the influences of the many-sided city life by which he was surrounded. In the harbour were to be found ships with sailors who hailed from the most distant countries of the known world. The earliest and therefore the most ineffaceable memories of the boy would conjure up pictures of strange men in foreign garb ; he would recollect how his ears were assailed by the unaccustomed accents of an unfamiliar language, showing that the speaker was what the Greeks called a barbarian, and the English a foreigner. Then there was the march of the legions ; the magnificent and stately processions connected with the official life of the representative of Rome ; the clash of steel and the clangour of trumpets ; the stir and bustle of the busy town ; the solemn ritual of the pagan rites and ceremonies ; the light, colour and gaiety, which have largely passed out of life and could only have been effectively developed under the brilliant southern or eastern skies. He may have heard of distant lands ; perhaps he caught some word of that island which the Romans had visited, away in the wastes of the

northern seas, called Britain; and may have wondered at the reports of the cold climate and the mists in which these forbidding and barbarous regions were enveloped, so different from the sunny southern latitudes in which he was born and lived.

But Saul was subject to two very different classes of formative influences. There was the Hellenic atmosphere of the city; and the Hebraic spirit of the synagogue and the home circle. To the combination or the opposition of these two influences most of the movements which have influenced the destinies of humanity may be traced. But the Greek influence did not count for so much in the education of the future Apostle as might be supposed. The influence of the home will always be paramount; and the heroes with whose exploits the thoughts of the boy busied themselves were not Theseus, Hercules and the gods and demi-gods of the famous mythologies, but the valorous men of the stories of the land to which his people belonged, Samson, David, Abraham, and the rest. Saul could not be cited as an example of a Jew who completely surrendered himself to Hellenic influences. St. Stephen had gone much farther in this direction.

Whatever influences Tarsus may have exerted on him were soon to be overlaid, although not uprooted, by his experiences and training at Jerusalem. But the mine had been prepared, and nothing was needed but the electric spark of Stephen's eloquence and revolutionary point of view to cause the upheaval.

III

JERUSALEM

The boy Saul was probably about thirteen years of age when he came to Jerusalem. Later in his life he refers to himself as having been brought up in that city at the feet of Gamaliel, and the expression indicates that some portion of his youthful days was spent in the capital of Palestine (Acts xxii. 3). The voyage down the coast of Syria, in the course of which the ship probably put in at Seleucia and Tyre, was a wonderful adventure to the boy who was leaving home for the first time. We do not know whether he travelled in the company of a passenger, or in charge of some member of his family. At a later period we find that he has a sister settled in Jerusalem. It has been suggested that the whole family migrated to Palestine, since the political outlook at Tarsus was very unsettled about this time.

Cæsarea, where he disembarked, was built on Roman models and would not have been altogether unlike Tarsus; but owing to the architectural proclivities of Herod the Great, by whom the city was founded, the harbour and the public buildings were on a much grander scale than anything Saul had seen before. Happily, to him as to all mortals, the future was veiled, and no thought disturbed his

youthful mind of the captivity which awaited him in this city in the years to come.

But his heart was filled with the emotions which had been awakened by the teaching of his co-religionists in Tarsus. Jerusalem, the historic capital of his nation, the city of David " the sweet singer of Israel," was the goal on which his thoughts were bent. The sights of Cæsarea, the power of Rome, the flamboyant architecture of Herod, found little place in his mind now that his destination was so near. The only building he desired to see was the Temple. This was the central shrine of his religion, since here alone, on the mount of Moriah, did the Levitical priests offer up the sacrifices of the Law. The Jews of the Dispersion had to content themselves with the services of the synagogue in which sacrifices found no place ; and the conversations at Tarsus to which Saul listened would often have turned on the blessedness of those who lived in the shadow of the building where the Levitical ritual was carried out in its completeness, and who could ascend into the hill of the Lord. It is easy to understand the impulse which led the Jews who could afford the journey to return from whatever foreign city they had inhabited to pass away their years of retirement by the sacred mount. Saul was only a boy, but his imagination must have been vividly impressed by the stately building and the elaborate ritual of the services. This building, for which the Jews felt such reverence, had been rebuilt by Herod the Great, who had a decided leaning towards the grandiose in

architecture. He also exhibited a brilliant impartiality, since he built a shrine for the Samaritans, and in Cæsarea erected another magnificent temple to the honour of Augustus.

Saul was too young to have suffered the pangs of disillusionment; his judgment could only develop as his experience grew; he resembled his Master at twelve years of age, Who also was found in the Temple, listening with deepest interest to the sayings of the grave and reverend men who were attached to the building. But the advance of years brings change of views. When our Lord began His public ministry He regarded the system which had grown up round the Temple from a standpoint which was entirely different; and a similar revolution of thought and feeling awaited the pupil of Gamaliel.

There was another building of grim and threatening aspect, close beside the Temple, which must frequently have caught the eye of Saul. This was the powerful fortress of Antonia, situated at the north-western corner of the Temple and connected with the sacred building by cloisters. Herod the Great built it to overawe Jerusalem, and named it after Mark Antony, whose cause he had espoused in the civil war with Octavian. But when the fortunes of Antony were overthrown at Actium, and Octavian became Emperor as Augustus, Herod showed himself master of sufficient political craft, not merely to avoid disaster in the overthrow of his patron, but actually to receive a considerable increase of power at the hand of the victor. Here again the chances

of the future were hidden from the eye of the boy ; he gazed on the forbidding fortress with no suspicion that one day its stout walls would afford him shelter against an infuriated mob of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the people to whom he was now preparing to become a teacher (Acts xxi. 37).

Saul probably came to Jerusalem some years after the visit of our Lord recorded in Luke ii. 42. A great change had by this time come over the political situation in Judæa. On the death of Herod the Great in 4 B.C. his dominions were divided between his sons ; and while Herod Antipas, who is so prominent in the Gospel history, obtained Galilee, Samaria and Judæa fell to the lot of Archelaus, who is mentioned in Matt. ii. 22. The reign of Archelaus only lasted about ten years, for in A.D. 4 his subjects were driven by his excessive cruelty to appeal to Augustus, with the result that he was arrested, conveyed to Rome, and finally banished to Gaul. The southern portion of Palestine then fell directly under Roman authority, and was administered by procurators who were responsible to the proconsul of Syria, whose headquarters were in Antioch. Coponius was the first of the procurators, and he had a number of successors, the most widely known being the sixth, Pontius Pilate. At this time also the right to inflict capital punishment was withdrawn from the Jews and reserved solely for the Roman tribunals.

Jerusalem when Saul took up his abode in it was to a large extent a city isolated from the rest of the

world. In this respect it stood in marked contrast with Tarsus, the city in which he was born. To keep the Gentile entirely outside the holy territory was impossible in days when Rome was mistress of the world. The capture of Jerusalem by Pompey in 63 B.C. was a startling reminder that the sceptre had passed from Judah. After this event the country fell under the sway of the Herodian family, until the deposition of Archelaus led to the advent of the line of Roman procurators.

But Jerusalem lived on memories of the past, and the rule of the hated Idumean family and of the Romans only turned the thoughts of the patriots back with fiercer pride and longing for independence to the time when the Maccabean family vindicated the liberties of the country against the Seleucid kings of Antioch. It was the most recent period of national glory, although well-nigh 200 years had passed since the outbreak of the rebellion. But although it was glorious in the annals of the Jews, it was of small significance in comparison with the great world movements which were in progress in the same age. It was merely an episode in the age-long conflict between the East and the West. Still the memory served to fan the embers of political discontent, and the procurators did not find the Jews meekly submissive to their rule.

There were two great schools of theological thought at Jerusalem, one of which looked for inspiration to Hillel, the other to Shammai. The doctrines of Hillel were liberal and progressive, while

the principles enunciated by Shammai were traditional and rigorous. At this time the leader of the school founded by Hillel was Gamaliel, and it was under him that Saul was entered as a pupil. Gamaliel was the most celebrated teacher of the day, and is mentioned in the sacred record. As a member of the Sanhedrin he intervened in favour of the Apostles when they were summoned before that tribunal, and the line he took on that occasion shows that his mind was not closed against the reception of new truth. He does not exclude the possibility that the universally decried sectaries may after all be the depositaries of a divine revelation (Acts v. 34–39).

This openmindedness which characterises him in the Acts is quite in harmony with the references to him which occur in Jewish writings. He was a teacher whose liberal tendencies were strongly marked. The great leader of the opposite or strictly orthodox school had been the famous Rabbi Shammai. The decision of these teachers as to the legitimacy of any matter which might be referred to them for a pronouncement was conveyed in the well-known phrase "the school of Shammai binds, the school of Hillel looses"; one holds it to be a duty, the other asserts that it is not to be required. These were the familiar contemporary phrases which our Lord employed when He said to His disciples, "Whatsoever ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven"; and when this is kept in mind there will be little difficulty in understanding His meaning. It is remarkable that Saul, who, as is evident even from

his own testimony (Gal. i. 14) quite apart from the narrative in the Acts, proved to be a most punctilious Pharisee, should have been the pupil of a man who was noted for his broad sympathies.

But the training which the Rabbis imparted was very defective. It was based upon authority and precedent, and little encouragement was given to the spirit of free inquiry. Saul's studies for the Jewish Rabbinate were mainly conversant with the Law, and the interpretations of the Law which had commended themselves to learned commentators of bygone days. The glosses of the Rabbis were held to be almost of as great authority as the sacred text itself. It was a system in which the proof-text method held undisputed sway and consequently the letter of Holy Writ came to be considered as of sole importance to the entire exclusion of the spirit of the inspired writings. Saul was trained in this system during his most impressionable years, and he never completely succeeded in later days in ridding his mind of the peculiar bent which was communicated to it in Jerusalem.

Some examples of the results of this method of teaching as they can be detected in his writings may be of interest. When writing to the Corinthians, he argues that the maintenance of its teacher is a duty incumbent on the Christian congregation, and in order to prove the point he quotes the Old Testament command, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn." The connection between this humane provision of the old Law and

the maintenance of the clergy would not be readily perceptible to those who had not been trained in the schools of the Rabbis. But the Apostle goes further than this, since he completely does away with the original meaning of the words by asking the famous question, "Does God take care for oxen?" Here we have an example, quite in the rabbinic style, of the imposition of a figurative meaning on a passage of Scripture with the result that its literal meaning and original intention are completely altered (1 Cor. ix. 9).

There is another example of rabbinic influence in the same letter. On this occasion the Apostle employs one of the stories which were in circulation among the schools to amplify the information given in the Old Testament. The legend ran that the rock which Moses had smitten to produce water for the people, followed the tribes throughout their wanderings in the wilderness, and in this way precluded a recurrence of drought. Although there is no authority for this story in the Bible, it was familiar to the Apostle, and he employed it as a peculiarly appropriate illustration of the spiritual presence of Christ. "They drank of a spiritual rock that followed them: and the rock was Christ" (1 Cor. x. 4).

A striking example of what may be termed the proof-text method of establishing a truth is found in the case of St. Paul's most fundamental doctrine. The system of justification by faith may without hesitation be described as epoch-making, since

in the first century, in the hands of St. Paul, it transformed what was in danger of becoming a Jewish sect into a world-wide religion ; and in the sixteenth century, in the hands of Luther, secured the inestimable blessing of religious liberty and freedom of thought for Western humanity. But the Apostle drew his Old Testament justification for the doctrine from an obscure text in one of the prophets which is least frequently read : " The just shall live by faith " (Hab. ii. 4).

In another passage relying on rabbinic tradition he is able to give the names of the Egyptians who withstood Moses, although the names are unrecorded in the sacred writings (2 Tim. iii. 8).

Such was the system in which the Apostle was trained. For twelve or fifteen years the lives of St. Paul and his Master ran their course unnoticed by history, one in the capital city of Palestine, the other in an obscure northern village. During the years of our Lord's public ministry, St. Paul was, so far as we know, still in Jerusalem, and we may see in this fact one of the reasons why they did not meet. Our Lord avoided the capital, and only visited it when it was impossible to do otherwise. St. John's Gospel is mainly occupied with events in Jerusalem. How often our Lord visited the city is uncertain, but even if the pupil of Gamaliel had heard of this northern movement, he would have felt but little interest in it, however much it may have stirred the Galilean peasantry or the lower orders in Jerusalem.

But it is also quite possible that Saul, who was now a promising young Rabbi, may have been absent from Jerusalem at this period. The Sanhedrin maintained close and frequent communication with the colonies of their co-religionists in the cities abroad, and the enthusiastic young man who had completed a brilliant university career was just the one who would have been employed on commissions of this nature. He would thus have ended his studies with a sort of wander-year.

The most interesting fact about this period of his life is supplied by the Apostle himself. Many years afterwards, writing to the Galatians, he refers to his student days at Jerusalem. One sentence is particularly noticeable: "I advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of mine own age among my countrymen" (Gal. i. 14). In other words, he outstripped his competitors and was the most promising man of his year.

Whatever was the reason, the Apostle never met the Master when He was on earth. There were others of his class, members of the Sanhedrin, who conversed with Christ. Nicodemus will be readily remembered; but the privilege was withheld from Saul. He was continually taunted with this fact throughout his life. If the meeting had taken place, he could instantly have disposed of the insinuations of his opponents. But he kept silence.

IV

STEPHEN

Saul was first brought into contact with the New Faith by the martyrdom of Stephen. Stephen came into prominence in the primitive assembly of believers in Jerusalem as one of the deacons, who were appointed as the result of a dispute which had broken out between the native and the foreign Jews. The Jews who had lived abroad and spoke Greek were called Hellenists (Acts vi. 1), and Stephen was the leader of this party among the followers of the Way. Saul was also a Hellenist, but at this time a vigorous supporter of the old religion. A great portion of the New Testament must remain a mystery to readers who have an insufficiently clear comprehension of the distinction between these two classes of Jews.

The wars between the Greeks and the Persians were the outcome of the conflict between the ideals of Eastern and Western civilization. Persia had conquered the whole of Asia Minor, including the settlements of the Ionic Greeks on the shores of the Ægean. Under the leadership of Darius and Artaxerxes, the Persians endeavoured to establish themselves on the other side of the Ægean. They were formidable from sheer weight of numbers, and

the pressure from behind drove them across the Hellespont into Greece itself. But the Greeks of Europe were made of sterner stuff than their brethren of the Ionic colonies. Their horror of the Persian yoke inspired them with the immortal valour which enabled them to drive the invading hordes back over the Hellespont, and to prove to the world that mere bulk is miserably inferior when confronted by the determined spirit of free men. The future of Western civilization was trembling in the balance at this period when the spirit of the Greeks rose to its height; then Marathon was a name to conjure with, and Æschylus chanted the glories of the Persian war.

But the time came when Greece lost its political independence and passed under the sway of Philip of Macedon. His son Alexander carried the war against the Persians across the Ægean. He first came into touch with the Oriental forces at the Granicus, a river not far from Troas, a town which is of great importance in the life of St. Paul. By his victory here he became master of Asia Minor. His second great battle against the Persians was fought at Issus, at the opposite or south-eastern corner of Asia Minor, near to St. Paul's city, Tarsus. By this victory the way to Babylon was thrown open; but before proceeding to the East he turned southwards, sacked Tyre, visited Jerusalem, and founded in Egypt Alexandria, the city which bears his name to this day.

When he resumed his march to the East he routed

the Persian forces at Arbela, and eventually overthrew their Empire. But to adopt a phrase of Chateaubriand concerning Napoleon, having conquered the Persians he was unable to conquer himself. The most lasting result of his march was that the East became permeated with the Greek spirit. In some cases the intrusion of Western influences was resented, as in Palestine, where the national opposition to the introduction of foreign customs led to the Maccabean rebellion. But the Jews who lived outside of Palestine were entirely exposed to the influence of Greek ideals and institutions.

During the time of Alexander and his successors there were numerous colonies of the Jews in the cities of the Macedonian Empire. After the first generation the vast majority of this Jewish population was born abroad; and Jerusalem and the Temple were to them but revered and sacred names. None but the wealthy could afford the journey to Palestine to enjoy the privilege of sharing in the Levitical ritual of the Temple; so that to the foreign Jews the synagogue took the place of the Levitical system. A life which was spent away from the stagnation of Palestine and in close association with the multitudinous interests, creeds, and peoples of the Græco-Roman world produced two very opposite effects on the believers in the old system. On the one hand it tended to liberalize the minds of some and make them more receptive of new ideas; but on the other the unceasing contact with the vices

and enormities of city life threw many Jews back on themselves and their own religion by the mere force of isolation, and made them more fanatically tenacious of the creed which distinguished them from the mass of their fellow-citizens.

The events at Jerusalem which culminated in the martyrdom of St. Stephen were due to the mutual hostilities of the foreign and the Palestinian Jews. Numbers of exiled Jews returned to establish themselves or finish their days in Jerusalem as soon as their circumstances allowed. Meeting their friends who had lived in the same cities and countries abroad, they formed societies and had their own synagogues. The Book of the Acts mentions a synagogue of the Libertines or freedmen who came from Rome; of the Cyrenians and Alexandrians, both from Africa, the former far to the west; and of the Cilicians in the south and the Asians in the west of Asia Minor. When these places are located on the map some idea will be formed of the vast area from which Greek-speaking Jews returned to Jerusalem.

Stephen, like Saul, belonged to this class of foreign Jews, but we have no information as to what quarter of the world he lived in before he returned to Jerusalem. When the Greek-speaking Jews arrived at Jerusalem they found there a large population of Hebrew or Aramaic-speaking Jews who had never set foot outside the borders of their native country. The fact that the Hellenists or foreign Jews, who had joined the congregation of early

believers, complained that their widows were overlooked in the daily ministration of relief, led the Apostles to appoint seven men, who by the way are not called deacons in this chapter, to superintend the social service work in the community (Acts vi.). It will be seen that this dispute between the Hebrews and the Hellenists was but a very faint echo of the mighty conflict which had been in progress for centuries between Greek and Oriental ideas. The Apostles to a man were home-born Jews, Hebrews as they are called in this chapter; but they displayed a magnanimous spirit in dealing with the difficulty, for, if we can take their names as an indication, every one of the Seven was a Hellenist or foreign Jew. Stephen, by his ability and energy, soon became distinguished as the leader of this party among the adherents of the Way.

But there were also Jews from abroad residing at Jerusalem who regarded this new sect with no favourable eye. Their experience among foreign peoples where hatred and contempt embittered their lives, had confirmed them in their moody bigotry, and rendered them incapable of appreciating the principles of liberty and progress which were of the essence of the New Faith as enunciated by Stephen. Disputes broke out, and when they had been worsted by Stephen in public controversy they haled him before the Sanhedrin on a charge of blasphemy. There is nothing to discredit the supposition that Saul may have been one of the Cilicians who headed the attack on this early champion of an enlightened and spiritual

religious faith (vi. 9). The charge of blasphemy which was formulated before the Sanhedrin was based on his declaration that the Temple would be destroyed, and the customs delivered by Moses altered (vi. 14). This was also the accusation which had led to the execution of Stephen's Master.

This accusation is of the utmost importance because it shows that St. Stephen, the foreign Jew, who so far as we know had never heard or seen our Lord, was the only individual in Jerusalem at this time, of whom we have any record, who had fully grasped this side of His teaching ; and also because it enables us to see that it was from St. Stephen that St. Paul received the impulse which drove him along the line of speculation which ultimately revealed to him the imperfect and transitory nature of the Law as delivered by Moses. St. Stephen perished ; but the principle for which he contended survived. It was taken up by St. Paul and developed to such an extent that the persecuted sect became a world-wide religion.

We only possess an outline of the speech which he made in his defence, although it is the longest report which is contained in the Acts. It may be remarked in passing that the differences between the speech and the Old Testament by which readers are frequently perplexed are in great part due to the fact that Stephen was a Greek-speaking Jew, and like St. Paul, used the Septuagint or Greek Old Testament. The Authorised Version of the Old Testament is, of course, translated from the Hebrew.

The references to the wisdom of Moses (vii. 22), or to the fact not prominently mentioned in the Old Testament that the Law was given by angels (vii. 38, 53), show that he, like St. Paul in this also, was familiar with the traditions and speculations of the Rabbis.

A sufficiently large portion of the speech is recorded to enable us to realize the point of view which St. Stephen forced upon his auditors with such irresistible spirit. The people of Jerusalem naturally vaunted above all things the dignity of the national shrine and the unique sacredness of the Holy Land. Formal religion degenerates easily into superstition, and the great gods of the Jewish idolatry were the Temple and Palestine. St. Stephen, the foreign Jew, accumulates numbers of historical instances which prove to demonstration that the God of their fathers had not limited His presence to the confines of Palestine—that other countries, even idolatrous countries, had been the scene of manifestations of His activity; then he falls back on the veritable prophetic doctrine, and with sublime courage thunders out before the horror-stricken audience the truth that no shrine, however revered, however sacred, is adequate to be the dwelling-place of the Most High. "Heaven is my throne, and earth is the footstool of my feet: what manner of house will ye build me? saith the Lord."

The fury which distorted the countenances of his judges convinced him of what was to follow. He throws away the scabbard, and fights to the end with the naked blade. Amid a scene of wild

excitement he hurls passionate denunciations against his enemies. They are the real apostates. Stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart, they profess to be Jews, but are unworthy to bear the name; degenerate Israelites, they are the undeniable descendants of the men who killed the prophets. The Law was given by Angels; there is no word more frequently on their lips and there is nothing for which they care less.

It is the outburst of a spiritually-minded man against those who, without a spark of religion in their hearts, being nothing but the supporters of a system, continually make the most sacred professions and are too readily accepted by the unreflecting at their own valuation. There is no more constant hindrance to the progress of true religion than the prevalence of this spirit, and the warning, unhappily, is one which will never be out of date.

The last accusation of Stephen excited his judges to the verge of frenzy. A scene of the wildest confusion follows; every semblance of judicial formality is thrown to the winds; with a howl of rage the onlookers, accusers and judges hurl themselves on the heroic champion of spiritual religion; a whirling mass of raving humanity rolls through the streets of Jerusalem, Stephen, bruised and battered, in the centre where the rushes are most vicious; and by the time the outside of the city is reached there is little remnant of life in the maltreated body to be dispatched by the stones of his tormentors.

The Jews had been deprived of the right of inflicting the death penalty. The murder of Stephen—martyrdom, although a glorious word for the victim is entirely too lenient for the persecutors—was not effected by judicial sentence, but by the operation of mob law. If the martyrdom occurred in 37, the Roman administration was too closely occupied by changes in the political world to inquire rigorously into outbursts of popular feeling. Pilate had been deposed in 36; his successor had not yet arrived; and the supreme proconsul from Antioch, who came to Palestine to inquire into the misdeeds of Pilate, had returned again to his seat of government and was immersed in the press of work occasioned by a change of Emperors. The death of Tiberius, under whom our Lord was crucified, had relieved the Roman world of an odious tyrant, and Caius (Caligula) was on the throne.

The memory of this fatal day was never to be obliterated from the mind of Saul. The executioners laid down their garments at his feet; he was a consenting party to a deed of pitiless violence. But he experienced no pang of compunction at the time; on the contrary, it seemed to him that the honour of Jehovah would be compromised if the abhorrent sect to which St. Stephen belonged were not speedily exterminated. The principles which Stephen had championed appeared to him to be noxious blasphemy. Like all persecutors who embark on their sanguinary work in a wholehearted spirit, he had little difficulty in persuading

himself that his cause was the cause of the Almighty. It has not been in the first century nor among the Jews alone that the name of God has been invoked to countenance proceedings which are not merely doubtful, but positively odious and immoral. When anything is urged in the name of God which contradicts the elementary human feelings then there is immediate cause for suspicion that religion has degenerated into fanatical superstition.

V

DAMASCUS

The death of Stephen was the signal for the outburst of a terrible persecution against the disciples. The adherents of the Way were hunted out, put on trial, and then imprisoned and scourged. Saul was the most active agent in this harrying of the believers. He quickly drew the attention of all to himself by his untiring zeal in tracking down the heretics. His excuse was the excuse of all persecutors; in his ignorance he believed that he was serving God. Thus the divine name was blasphemed even as the sacred name of liberty was trampled in the mire during the excesses of the French Revolution. We have ceased to-day to plead the name of God as an excuse for persecution and murder; but we should be altogether too sanguine if we imagined that this convenient principle had been entirely banished from our social and religious life. We can only be quite sure of successfully resisting its seductions when we insist that nothing can be from God which contradicts the fundamental instincts of our nature; and that, if the service of heaven appear to require unkindness or cruelty, this is proof positive that we are following a deity

which is false. Anything which gives an excuse for the exercise of the lower parts of our nature is not from God.

The memory of those awful days was burned into Saul's consciousness. Repeatedly in later years he laments his excesses during this period, and the sufferings of women are particularly mentioned. That his fault was the result of his education and his narrow outlook on life did not lessen the bitterness of his subsequent self-reproach. But regret was unavailing; nothing could ever undo the harm he had wrought on his victims. Nothing could restore the wife to the husband, give back the wasted years of the wretches who were imprisoned, or remove the scars of the scourge from their bodies. Little wonder that in later years, thinking of his inhumanity, he calls himself the chief of sinners (1 Tim. i. 15).

But at the moment there was no thought of future remorse. He gloried in the work and soon came to be regarded as the chief inquisitor. When his fearful employment slackened at Jerusalem owing to the flight of the believers, he determined to pursue them to Damascus. No difficulties were thrown in the path of such a zealous servant of the faith, and he was speedily equipped with the warrant of the High Priest to continue his terrible occupation in the Syrian city.

It is, of course, edifying to sing hymns about the persecutor becoming an Apostle, but if we really wish to understand what Saul was before his

conversion, the only way in which it can be done is to imagine ourselves in the position of a man torn from his family and thrust into a gloomy dungeon, or of a woman whose husband had been cruelly scourged. The loathing and rage which he inspired would be intensified by the ghastly feeling of impotence, inasmuch as his official relationships secured him from retaliation. There probably were not many murders; isolated cases like that of St. Stephen might occur when the preoccupation of the officials rendered it safe. Indeed from some words of St. Paul we gather that such martyrdoms took place (Acts xxvi. 10). But the jealousy of Rome for her prerogatives prevented anything like a wholesale outbreak of murder.

When the feverish lust of persecution was strong upon Saul, the week which the caravan took to traverse the hundred and forty miles between Jerusalem and Damascus must have seemed endless. There was a strange contrast between the murderous thoughts which filled the mind of the Jewish Rabbi and the beauty of the peaceful city on the edge of the desert. The tumult in his darkened mind is referred to by himself, when he says that being exceedingly mad against the believers he persecuted them even to foreign cities (Acts xxvi. 11).

The beauty of Damascus, situated between barren mountains and the desert, has been sung by many a poet. The Barada breaks through the Anti-Libanus range, and, dividing itself up into several branches, two of which were the Abana and Pharpar

mentioned in the Old Testament, transforms a district thirty miles in diameter into a scene of fertile beauty before it runs itself dry in the desert. The sterility of the desert and the barrenness of the mountains lend the additional charm of contrast to this country of waving trees and refreshing verdure, in the midst of which lies Damascus, one of the most ancient cities mentioned in the Bible. The city on the border of the desert is for ever associated with the story of the Israelitish maid who was instrumental in bringing about the cure of the Syrian warrior who was afflicted with leprosy. During the time that Antony had control of the East he gave this territory to Cleopatra, and the Damascenes had an opportunity of wondering at the "Serpent of old Nile." About the time of Saul's conversion the city was seized by Aretas, king of Arabia Petræa, who was at war with Herod Antipas. Herod married the daughter of this king, but had repudiated her for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, as is related in the Gospel story.

But Saul was not destined to carry out his programme at Damascus. The story of his conversion is related three times in the Acts; but the shortest as well as the best account is that which the Apostle gives in a few words, in the letter to the Galatians (i. 15): "It pleased God to reveal his Son in me." The outer and the inner visions coincided, but it was the vision of the heart alone which had any importance. Others might see the

blinding flash and hear the roll of thunder; but Saul alone knew that his soul had heard the authentic voice of the Divine. He was the only one in the company who experienced the horror of viewing his present course of action in all its naked cruelty. Little wonder that he is stricken to the earth. His mission to Damascus was to arrest the believers, and now he himself, as he expresses it in the Philippians, is arrested by Christ (Phil. iii. 12). It is impossible to imagine or to describe this occurrence. The Apostle himself to the day of his death never fully realized all that it implied (Phil. iii. 13). The whole of his future life will be the commentary on it.

It was in the holy of holies of the soul that the Voice had spoken. In after life, when men taunted him because he had not lived with Christ in Galilee, St. Paul always insisted that he had seen the Lord. One fact which he never wearies of emphasizing is, that his conversion was entirely the result of divine action, tainted in nowise by human interference. True it is that he was baptized by Ananias, and that his experience in the neighbourhood of Damascus was the culminating point in a spiritual struggle which had been started by the fiery words of St. Stephen; but in the Galatian letter, which gives some priceless glimpses of the workings of his soul at this period, he tells us that instead of conferring with flesh and blood as to the meaning of this sudden dislocation of his career he made his way into the desert to communicate with his God and his own soul. It was in the deserts outside Damascus that

he lived, wandering from settlement to settlement, or seated at evening time by the camp fires of some nomad Arabs.

Three years elapsed while Saul was growing accustomed to his new spiritual environment. Some of the time was spent in Damascus, but St. Luke, in the Acts, seems to know nothing about this sojourn in the Arabian desert; in any case he does not mention it. It was one of the most important periods in St. Paul's career. The man of the city was in the desert. Solitariness seems natural enough in the case of our Master or of John the Baptist; but the sense of freedom in these infinite spaces must have come with healing and blessing to the man accustomed to the fever and the fret of towns, in this period of spiritual strife and anguish. All the beliefs on which his past life had been built were crumbling beneath him, and out of the scattered ruins the new faith had not yet taken shape. In the wild chaos of thought and feeling the principles which were to control his future life were slowly being crystallized. Solitude, as Goethe says, is the nurse of genius. It is for this reason that the Apostle is careful to avoid contact even with the original Apostles who had shared their Master's life in Galilee (Gal. i. 17). The basal feeling in his consciousness was that his Gospel came to him not by man, but by revelation and from Jesus Christ Himself.

When Saul appeared in the synagogues of Damascus no longer to denounce the Way, but to declare that

the crucified Jesus was the Son of God, the consternation of the Jews may be imagined, more particularly as he insisted that the crucified Jesus was the Christ, or the Messiah, whose advent was expected by the orthodox Jews. It seemed that Saul, who had come to Damascus with a reputation for orthodoxy that was beyond question, had now become a heretic ; the Rabbi had become a despised Nazarene. It was now the lot of the Apostle to experience, in a slight degree, it is true, first at Damascus, but much more fully later, something of the cruelty which he had so unthinkingly inflicted in Jerusalem. The Jews who bitterly resented any innovation in their faith, particularly when championed by one whom they regarded as a renegade, formed a plot against his life ; and he only contrived to escape their malice by being lowered over the city wall in a basket. The humiliating circumstances of this escape seem to have made it linger in his mind, and he refers to it many years afterwards (2 Cor. xi. 33). In that passage he mentions the fact that Damascus at this time was held by the ethnarch of Aretas. In the war which broke out between this king and Herod Antipas about the matter of his daughter, the troops of the Galilean king had suffered a defeat which was regarded by the populace of Palestine as a divine visitation on that potentate for the murder of John the Baptist. Herod called in the aid of the Romans, and Aretas took the opportunity of seizing Damascus. But when Vitellius, the proconsul of Syria, was on the march with a

considerable force, the news of the death of Tiberius arrived and all operations were immediately suspended; so that at the moment there was nothing to disturb Aretas in his possession of the city.

On escaping from Damascus Saul determined to return to Jerusalem. He made the journey in very different circumstances and with a very different spirit from the journey of three years before. But when he arrived at Jerusalem it was impossible to persuade the believers that he also was a disciple. It was a far different case from that of Coriolanus among the Volscians; it was not a general who took refuge with his foes, but a persecutor seeking an alliance with his victims. The lapse of years had done nothing to mitigate the feelings of abhorrence with which he was regarded by the followers of the Way. His position was unenviable and uncomfortable in the extreme, until Barnabas stood forward to act as his sponsor. We are not told from what source Barnabas derived his knowledge of Saul's conversion. We know from the Apostle's own words that rumours of the event had spread over Palestine (Gal. i. 22). The acquaintance between the two men, for aught we know to the contrary, may have been of long standing. They both came from the north; Cyprus, the home of Barnabas, lay within easy sail of Tarsus, and Barnabas may have been a student in the university there. The story in the Acts does not read as if the men had met at that moment for the first time, although it is difficult to imagine when

the opportunity for an earlier meeting occurred, except on the supposition that when his training under Gamaliel was completed Saul returned to Tarsus for some time. But whether they had already made acquaintance or not the Cypriote performed for Saul one of those kindly offices which remain unique in the life of a man. When all looked askance he extended the hand of fellowship. In this he manifested a spirit as valuable as it is unusual. It is in no case pleasant to associate with a man who is the object of suspicion, and the unpleasantness is greatly increased when the man who takes the step runs the risk of forfeiting an important position. Barnabas hazarded the high esteem in which he was held by the early believers; and when all that is involved in his espousal of the cause of the reformed persecutor is realized, it will be seen that the spirit he showed is as rare in the twentieth century as it was in the first.

But when the lead was once given all was well. Saul had no difficulty in proving his sincerity. He engaged in disputation with the Grecian Jews of the city, that is, with the foreign Jews of the Dispersion, the class to which he belonged himself. But like their brethren at Damascus they preferred assassination to argument, and the believers, in order to protect their new comrade, so strangely evolved from a persecutor, sent him down to Cæsarea on the coast, whence he took ship for Tarsus, and found himself once more in the scenes in which his boyhood was passed.

Damascus

The phase through which St. Paul passed is one which must be encountered by every individual who thinks. Beliefs which have been held sacred from the time of childhood, when they were received on authority, are discovered to be defective when examined by the awakened consciousness of spiritual manhood. This is a stage in advance which awaits every individual and every church which makes spiritual progress. The dreary tract of doubt is not traversed without struggles which lacerate the heart. Faulty as early beliefs may appear in later days, they have struck roots deep into our nature, and to abandon them seems equivalent to renouncing part of our life. But the question must be faced as St. Paul faced it. Suggestion must be tracked to her inmost cell, and the partial truth of early years must be laid aside for the fuller truth of manhood. "When I was a child I thought as a child, . . . but when I became a man I put away childish things," are words of St. Paul, which are frequently forgotten to-day. This is the universal law of spiritual development, which is not to be attained without a struggle. St. Paul knew the struggle as many have known it since, as many know it to-day. It was no light matter to the Apostle to cut away so many beliefs in which his childhood had been nurtured. It required

> "the vigour bold to dwell
> On doubts that drive the coward back."

This is the conflict that raged in his soul during

the months he spent in the desert. Like the poet's friend he was sorely "perplext in faith," but like him and innumerable others from that day to this "at last he beat his music out."

VI

ANTIOCH

It was on Gentile soil, in Syria to be precise, that a beginning was made with the work which Christ commended to His disciples of preaching the Gospel to those who were neither Jews by birth nor proselytes. It was now probably six or seven years since our Lord had said to His disciples on the side of a Galilean hill, "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations," or, as the words might be equally well translated, "all the Gentiles." In bygone centuries, Syria had been one of Israel's hereditary enemies, and many stories of the fierce warfare which prevailed between the countries can be read in the Old Testament. Every child knows the history of Naaman the Syrian. In more recent centuries after the death of Alexander the Great, a line of Grecian kings, by whom Antioch was founded, had taken possession of the country; and one of their number proved himself the fiercest persecutor the Jews had encountered up to that period of their history. This monarch was called Antiochus Epiphanes or the Glorious; a title which the Jews in horror of his cruelty changed by the alteration of a single letter into Epimanes, the Maniac. This crisis in their history called forth the family of

the Maccabees to rouse the nation against the northern persecutor; and the war of independence, in addition to a glorious memory, has left a more tangible memorial in the Book of Daniel.

But in New Testament times, the line of Seleucid kings had long ceased to reign in Syria, and the country formed part of a province of the Empire, its capital Antioch (called after the kings who founded it) being the headquarters of the proconsul who was in supreme control of the vast province of Syria and Cilicia. The procurators who governed Palestine were subject to this all-powerful official. A reference in the Gospel narrative to one of these proconsuls may be seen in Luke ii. 2.

Antioch, the capital of Syria and of the province, beautifully situated on the banks of the Orontes, was one of the most famous cities in the East. After Rome and Alexandria, it was the largest and most magnificent city in the Empire. Its favoured situation, sheltered by Amanus on the north and the Lebanon range on the south, caused it to be chosen as a residence by many people of wealth, Romans among others. But the populace of the city was notorious for its degradation; and Juvenal, who contemplated the influx of degenerate Greeks and Orientals into Rome with the utmost dismay, cries out bitterly that the Syrian Orontes had for too long been emptying her waters into the Roman Tiber. Chariot races in the stadium contributed greatly to the interest of life at Antioch the Beautiful, and the mob of the city was divided into parties

which carried the colours of their favourite drivers, and were ready to engage in faction fights on the slightest pretext, or on none. They were masters of the art of ridicule and lived simply for the day. Mommsen has noticed the failure of any permanent memorial of this brilliant and populous city. Antioch was excelled by no other city for the splendour of its public buildings ; and there was nothing even in Rome itself to equal the chief street of the city, which ran for four and a half miles with a broad carriage way in the middle, and a colonnade on each side. It was practically the capital for the East of the Empire till Constantine built Constantinople.

Five miles outside the city along the Orontes lay the celebrated grove of Daphne, a sanctuary of Apollo, where the worship of the god was celebrated with every refinement of sensuous appeal which the Greek spirit, in contact with Oriental luxury, showed itself capable of producing. The licentiousness of the place had passed into a proverb. Every delight with which nature could charm the senses existed here in profusion, and the lavish gifts of nature had been fostered and enhanced by the Greek kings of Antioch to such purpose that the grove of Daphne was one of the most celebrated haunts of pleasure in the Empire. When Antioch is mentioned in the New Testament, this scene of mingled beauty and corruption must be present to the mind. There was probably no city in the Empire except Corinth which might have been

considered less likely to become an important centre of Christianity ; and yet it was precisely here that the most epoch-making event since the conversion of Saul took place.

As in the case of many of the great turning points of history, the beginnings are lost in obscurity. The New Testament has not preserved the names of the pioneers in the great movement which subsequently became identified with the personality of St. Paul. The persecution which arose after the death of Stephen had scattered the believers of Jerusalem along the northern coastline ; they passed through Phœnicia with its towns Tyre and Sidon ; sailed over to Cyprus ; and travelled as far to the north as Antioch. But although they had changed their latitude they had not divested themselves of their Jewish particularism, and in these foreign regions they preached the Gospel to none but Jews. Nothing could be hoped for from men imbued with such principles. The sectarian spirit, then as now, was the natural enemy of progress. These were Palestinian Jews.

But there were also men of far different antecedents travelling in the same countries. They had not been brought up in the narrow ecclesiasticism of Jerusalem. They had been born and lived, like Simon who carried our Lord's cross, in Cyrene on the north coast of Africa ; or, like Barnabas, on the island of Cyprus. In consequence of their life in foreign countries and amid alien surroundings they had stripped themselves of many of the restrictions

which, as the ministry of our Lord testifies, had stifled the spirit of religion in Palestine. A step which would have caused a Palestinian Jew to recoil in horror seemed to them to be nothing but natural. If the religion of Christ were universal or catholic, it could not be confined to a single nation. The sun of progress casts a shadow, and when a decision to advance is arrived at there will always be somebody to be shocked. These unknown missionaries, however, did not allow themselves to be hampered by the consternation which their action caused. They left on one side all the considerations which were no doubt as eloquently urged upon them as upon their followers in every succeeding century, to show that any time save the present would be more suitable for taking such an unprecedented step. Having resolved to advance, they did not hesitate to put their theories into practice ; and although the consciences of the Jews who lingered in the old paths must have been rudely jarred, and in spite of the fact that a catena of passages from the Old Testament might be quoted to show that the Jews were the chosen of God, these unnamed adventurers took the step forward for which their Master had long been waiting. While St. Peter needed a thrice-repeated vision to urge him to take the elementary step of baptizing Cornelius, who was already attached to Judaism, these men, listening to nothing but the conviction of their hearts, preached the Saviour to people who were purely pagan. By this means alone would the Master see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied ;

in no other way could the nations of the world be gathered into the kingdom of God (Acts xi. 19, 20).

And so in spite of all the wearisome arguments against progress which have been repeated *ad nauseam* in every year from that time to the present by people whose faith burns low, the men of Cyprus and Cyrene, in determined violation of all custom, began to preach the Gospel to the Greeks, in spite of the fact that by so doing they were shaking the established order of things to the foundation. Hitherto the Good News of Christ had been preached to none but Jews, or at most and in few cases to those who had attached themselves to Judaism as proselytes ; and it is possible that these Antiochean pioneers began by speaking first to proselytes and were then led insensibly along their career of innovation. Up to this time, in order to arrive at Christ, it had been necessary to go round by Moses. In all the years that had passed since our Lord's death, the cause of the evangelization of the nations, or, to put it in another way, the formation of a universal Church, had advanced no further than this. There was no trace of Jewish particularism in His last command to make disciples of all the nations ; but how was it to be carried out if the maxims of obscurantism and self-interest continued to prevail ?

So far, then, as we read in the New Testament, the first step towards carrying our Lord's wishes into effect was taken by those unnamed Cyrenians and Cypriotes who spoke to the Greeks at Antioch. They did not wait to be encouraged by a vision ; the

perception of the opportunity was sufficient authorization. The welcome with which their preaching was received proved that the fields were white unto harvest. But it was not to be expected that the news of these revolutionary proceedings would be long in travelling to Jerusalem. Barnabas, who, as a native of Cyprus, might be supposed to have some knowledge of affairs in the north, is sent from Jerusalem to report on the amazing movement in Antioch. When he arrived he found the city looking as fair as ever under the brilliant Syrian sun. The crowds that thronged the streets were absorbed in discussions about the latest exploits of their favourite charioteers. The din of riotous revelry ascended every night from the intoxicated roisterers in the grove of Daphne. There was the blue of the distant Mediterranean, and the green of the myrtles and luxuriant palms. The fascinating city seemed entirely unchanged ; its corruption as obvious as its beauty. What was it to the gay population that a handful of their number had listened to the conversation of some wandering Jews ? Yet this was one of the most important events which have occurred in the history of humanity. From this obscure beginning sprang the movement which resulted in the formation of a catholic or comprehensive Church. Almost nineteen hundred years ago this ideal was given shape in Antioch ; numberless attempts have been made across the centuries to attain the ideal, most of them miserably inadequate, because enthusiasts have gone in the way of sectarianism

rather than of catholicity, and the greatest offenders have often been those who made most use of that much-abused word; but the form of Christianity which succeeds in expressing this comprehensive spirit of Christianity most clearly and forcibly will be irresistible in the twentieth century.

Barnabas was greatly impressed by the manifestation of the new spirit which met him at Antioch. He was so overwhelmed that he could not bring himself to waste time by reporting to Jerusalem. He immediately sailed to Tarsus, remembering that the most suitable assistant he could find for work of this nature was the man whom he had befriended several years before at Jerusalem. On that occasion Saul had received a foretaste of the Jewish hostility which was to follow him every day of his life, and had been compelled to return to Tarsus (Acts ix. 30). Here the years had passed in tent-making and evangelistic work in Cilicia; but whether he had preached to people who were not Jews we have no information. His heart must have leaped for joy on the day when Barnabas unexpectedly appeared before him with the news of the great development which was taking place in Syria. Here was work which had a future; it contained unlimited possibilities. The two friends came to Antioch and laboured together for a year.

If Antioch was celebrated for its beauty and notorious for its wickedness, it was also renowned for the rude and ready wit of its inhabitants. It was Antioch which dared to jest on Julian's beard, and

if an Emperor was not regarded by the citizens as immune from their gibes, neither was the obscure sect which had recently forced itself on their attention. The most satisfactory evidence of the rapid growth of the new faith is the fact that it was soon regarded as legitimate game by the jesters of Antioch. The invention of nicknames was the special accomplishment on which the city prided itself, and following the analogy of the parties which called themselves by the names of the popular charioteers, the nimble wits of Antioch soon labelled the followers of the new teaching "Christians." The "Christians" called themselves believers, brethren, or followers of the Way, and it will be seen at once that the name was not bestowed by the Jews, who never admitted that Jesus was the Messiah. (Christ is the Greek word for the Hebrew Messiah; the English word is Anointed.) It was the heathen populace of Antioch which invented in derision the title which has since become the name of the Universal Religion.

The most celebrated names in the Antiochean church in later centuries are those of Ignatius the martyr, Chrysostom, who lends his name to the beautiful concluding prayer of the Morning and Evening Service, and Simon Stylites, the pillar hermit. Each of them in his several way, although the devotion of Simon would not be ours, was worthy of the church which played such a decisive part in the history of primitive Christianity.

In Antioch the New Faith was born again. The Syrian capital became the cradle of Gentile

Christianity. Jersualem showed herself entirely unable to meet the demands of the new conditions. Jewish Christianity lingered on there till the city was destroyed by Titus. But it was in a great world-capital, where all the nationalities and all the phases of the many-sided Græco-Roman civilization were represented, that the believers first became conscious of the universality of the principles with which they had been entrusted by their Master.

Here we have a touchstone to test modern tendencies. Whatever is narrow, exclusive, partizan, does not belong to the religion of Christ. Antioch differed from Jerusalem in that she possessed creative force. A church which has lost this power of adaptation is not catholic. The twentieth century is upon us, teeming with problems and challenges for Christianity. If Christians continue to live in the third, the sixteenth, the nineteenth, or any other century but the twentieth, the spirit they display is the unprogressive spirit of Jerusalem and not the creative, catholic spirit of Antioch.

VII

CITIES OF GALATIA

SEVERAL years had passed in unobtrusive work in Syria and Cilicia when the call came to Saul to engage in a more extensive mission. The journey through Cyprus and Galatia, which is recorded in the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of the Acts, is the beginning of what was really his life's work; and it had a most important effect on his standing in the Christian Church. At the beginning of the journey Saul is simply one among many, his name is mentioned last in the list of teachers who were prominent at Antioch (xiii. 1); but as soon as Antioch is left behind he comes to the front, and ever after he is the acknowledged leader of the Gentile Mission. Barnabas, who up to this time had been prominent, is content with simple greatness to recognize the supremacy of the leader whom he had introduced to Antioch as an unknown teacher.

There was nothing to attract attention about the party of three men which started out from Antioch one morning as the city was preparing to renew its busy round of pleasure. Jews were numerous in the northern capital, and called for nothing

but a glance of contempt or a bitter gibe. But this group of wayfarers, which made its way along the banks of the Orontes, past the beautiful and vice-haunted grove of Daphne, down to the port of Seleucia, was embarking on a work the results of which were to endure ages after the wonderful Syrian city had passed out of existence. The faith of Jesus had been preached to the Gentiles in the home province of Syria and Cilicia; the next provinces westward were Cyprus and Galatia. In bending their steps in this direction the emissaries from Antioch, whether consciously or not, had begun a work which was not to be completed until Christ was proclaimed by an Apostle in Rome itself.

The name of the port, Seleucia, in which they took ship was derived from the line of Seleucid kings who reigned at Antioch in Macedonian times; as the name of the capital itself was taken from Antiochus, the personal name of several kings of this race.

At first the travellers were content not to break entirely new ground. A hundred miles out in the Mediterranean there lay the island of Cyprus, then a province of the Roman Empire, now a country which Great Britain enjoys the privilege of governing in consideration of an annual payment to Turkey. It was the native place of Barnabas, and was probably known to Mark, who was also travelling on the expedition. The chief towns on the island were Salamis at the eastern extremity, and Paphos at the west. At Paphos the travellers

stood on soil which was celebrated in song and fable Numberless are the poets who have sung the praises of the Paphian Venus sprung from the foam of the sea. Everybody knows the form which the painters of the Renaissance gave to the imperishable myth. It was in this district devoted to the cult of the Cyprian deity,

> " Idalian Aphroditè beautiful,
> Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian wells,"

that the Apostle was to proclaim the spiritual Gospel of his Master.

But Paphos is chiefly distinguished in the history of Saul because it is at this point that the historian ceases to refer to him by his Hebrew name, and elects for the future to know him only as Paul, the Roman citizen. It has sometimes been thought that the name was adopted because the proconsul of the island was called Sergius Paulus, but this explanation and others which have been advanced are extremely fanciful. There is nothing whatever remarkable in the change, and little that calls for explanation. Although the name Paul is mentioned here for the first time, it had belonged to the Apostle from his infancy. It was a frequent custom among the Jews to take a Greek or Roman in addition to the national Hebrew name. There are several instances in the New Testament. Thus, for example, Symeon, who is mentioned in the first verse, had been given the Latin name Niger ; in Colossians iv. 11, a Jew called Jesus is mentioned who also bore the

Latin name Justus; the attendant of the Apostles on this expedition, besides his Hebrew name John, bore the Roman name Marcus (Col. iv. 10), and like St. Paul is much better known by the Roman than by the Hebrew name. It was almost a necessity for a Jew living under the Empire outside of Palestine to have a Roman name. The change of name is made at this point of the history because the Apostle was now leaving the home countries behind and was going out into regions of the Empire with which he was entirely unacquainted. It was the first occasion on which he met a highly placed Roman official; and as it is the design of the historian of the Acts to trace the progress of Christ's Kingdom in the Empire, his hero is henceforth presented exclusively under his Roman name.

It is worth mentioning that St. Luke calls the official in charge of the island a proconsul. This is a good illustration of his accuracy as to titles. Cyprus had originally been an Imperial province, and was therefore governed by a propraetor; but an exchange had been effected between the Emperor and the Senate with the result that this body was now responsible for the government of the island, and the chief official was a proconsul.

A voyage of a few days' duration brought the company from Paphos to Perga in Pamphylia. Pamphylia was the next country westwards from Cilicia; but as the rugged and uncivilized western portion of Cilicia intervened, the Apostle had never

visited this district. There were many Jewish colonies scattered throughout these regions, and Jews from Pamphylia are mentioned among those who had gathered in Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost, recorded in the beginning of the Acts (ii. 10). There were several other elements in the population, which was in the highest degree mixed, as is indicated by the name, which signifies the country of all the tribes.

No halt is made for evangelistic work in Perga because an incident occurred which rudely disturbed the harmony which had hitherto prevailed. The reasons which led Mark to retire from the expedition may have been connected with the perils of the path ahead. The range of the Taurus rose grim and threatening before them, and in the ravines there lurked fierce bands of outlaws. It was to his experience in these regions that St. Paul alludes at a later date, when he spoke of the perils of rivers and perils of robbers which he had encountered (2 Cor. xi. 26). Here, too, he may in an attack of malaria have sown the seeds of that weakness which remained with him his life long as an angel or messenger of Satan to buffet him (2 Cor. xii. 7). The references in the Galatian letter imply some sort of breakdown (Gal. iv. 13).

The report of the perils of a journey through the wild and unsubdued regions before them may have induced St. Mark to turn back to Palestine and not to take part in what may have been an extension of their original plan. Perhaps he found himself

in closer sympathy with the more traditional teaching of St. Peter than with the modifications and developments which were manifest in St. Paul's presentation of the new faith. It may have been that his subordinate position in the expedition had become irksome, especially since his uncle had renounced the leadership. His mother was very influential in the assembly at Jerusalem (xii. 12), and her son was accustomed to meet with much consideration there. It may have been for some other reason much more creditable to St. Mark; but whatever was the cause, Palestine seemed to him to be much more desirable than Pamphylia and the Taurus, and he set out for Jerusalem.

The writer of the Acts has no information to give us about the crossing of the Taurus, but the hardships encountered on the journey left marks on St. Paul which accompanied him to the grave. Having crossed the mountain range, they arrived at Antioch in Pisidia. It was a familiar name in a strange country. There were several towns called by this name after the Seleucid kings who reigned at Antioch on the Orontes, from which the party had started. The Pisidian Antioch was of great importance. It was a Roman colony and the seat of the civil and military administration of the province. The military authorities were kept fully occupied in dealing with the marauding tribes of the mountains to the south, who, when booty was in sight, manifested but little respect for the *Pax Romana*.

The name of the city is evidence of the close relationship in which it stood to the Greek kings of Syria in bygone days. This fact enables us to understand the origin of the Jewish colony; for the deportation of bands of Jews to foreign cities was a constant feature in the policy of the Seleucid kings. When we speak of a Jewish colony it must be remembered that the word is used simply in the sense in which it is applied to the French or Italian colony in an English city. The idea of a Roman colony must be kept entirely distinct. It was an official matter and meant the settlement of a complete town.

The first recorded sermon of St. Paul was delivered in the synagogue of the Pisidian Antioch. At the customary point of the service, the committee, or board of elders, which was charged with the conduct of the proceedings, sent to the strangers and invited them to address the congregation. A very similar event in our Lord's life is recorded by St. Luke (iv. 16—30), and our Lord, Who gave expression to ideas which in the opinion of His hearers were heretical and violently subversive of accepted theories, met with the treatment which the Apostle so frequently experienced in later years at the hand of the synagogue congregations. Of course our Lord was well known to the elders who presided over the Nazareth synagogue when they asked him to speak, whereas St. Paul was a stranger to these Jews of Antioch. No doubt they had learned that he was a teacher; but it is worth noting that the right

to speak to a congregation was not so strictly guarded then as it is to-day; and it may be doubted whether, if our Lord or St. Paul appeared to-day in similar circumstances, it would be possible for them to speak in any of the buildings dedicated to the Christian religion. It may also be remarked that our Lord in Galilee follows the custom of the Jews and sits down to address the people, but St. Paul in Pisidia follows the custom of the Greeks and stands.

We are not to suppose that we have a verbal report of the actual sermon delivered by St. Paul. It is not probable that he or any of the company preserved a copy of the address, which was certainly much longer than the record in the Acts. Supposing, as there is not the slightest reason for doing, that such a report had been made, it would have to be preserved for a long time before it fell into the hands of St. Luke. At present the Apostle did not know such a man existed, much less had he any idea that he would one day be his biographer. In fact the Apostle did not consider his life of sufficient importance to be recorded, and certainly did not preserve his addresses for publication. But when St. Luke in later years was travelling in his company, and heard him deliver many speeches to audiences which were widely different, he realized that there were several leading principles which recurred from time to time, and on which the Apostle threw his whole emphasis. These are the portions of the speeches which the biographer of the Acts uses to illustrate

the teaching of the Apostle. In the present case a historical introduction leads up to Christ, Who had been betrayed by the people but raised up by the power of God. The resurrection, which was the central point of the Apostle's theology (it was the risen Christ, not the Christ of Galilee, Who had appeared to him), is presented as the culminating point of Jewish history.

His heresy appears when he insists that the Mosaic system was altogether inadequate to secure justification, which could only be obtained in Christ. It is true that this presentation of his favourite thesis is very colourless when compared with the Apostle's own arguments on the subject in his letters. But this is no reason for questioning its accuracy. The Apostle was feeling his way to the great truth, and the first steps would be uncertain and hesitating. It was only in the great controversy with the Jewish wing of the Church which soon afterwards broke out that he began to state his principles with uncompromising clearness. At present the mere hint that there were any matters in which the Law of Moses had proved inadequate was enough to excite the fiercest hostility of the more bigoted Jews. St. Luke has indicated the historical development of the Apostle's thought with great skill ; although it must not be forgotten that there are some who would take this rather weak expression of the Apostle's great thought as an echo coming from a later time when the memory of the sharpness and bitterness of the controversy had died away.

But we must not be led away into the question of the date and composition of the Acts.

A great congregation assembled on the following Saturday filled with eagerness to hear more of this strange teaching, which had been the sole topic of conversation during the week. The passions of the conservative party broke out in violent opposition against the new learning, which they represented as a passing novelty, fit only to catch the ears of those who were always craving for something new. But their attack rendered great service to the cause they hated; and Antioch of Pisidia is the first city so far as our information goes in which a congregation of Christian Gentiles was formed apart from the synagogue. It marked another stage in the great development. The turning points are clearly emphasised in the Acts: the preaching of Stephen; the conversion of Saul; the work of the pioneers at Antioch, where the two parties held together more or less closely until the incident which we will consider in the next chapter; and now the definite separation between the Synagogue and the Christian Congregation. In answer to the excited outcries of the synagogue, the Apostle declares that the Gospel should first have been preached to the Jews; they had the first claim on the new religion. But since they thrust it from them he will turn to the Gentiles. The definite breach had come, although the Apostle never ceased to address himself first to the synagogue.

The success which greeted the heretical teachers

only intensified the opposition of the orthodox. The Gentiles, men connected with the army, transport and customs, as well as the natives of the country who knew Greek, were powerfully influenced in favour of the new teachers ; but the women, who had great influence in Asia Minor, joined in the fray, together with the more important government officials, who would naturally be on the side of established custom, and such a storm broke over the heads of the missionaries that they were compelled to withdraw from Antioch.

The next halting place was Iconium, where they were under another jurisdiction. All these cities were situated on the great central plateau of Asia Minor, and Iconium was of special importance, since it was a station on the great road which connected Ephesus with Tarsus, Antioch and the Euphrates. Consequently, it was a great commercial centre with caravans constantly passing through on their way to and from the Ægean. It was one of those places beloved of the Apostle where a number of arteries were knotted together, and the news of Christ would be carried to distant regions by the circulation.

Therefore, in spite of the opposition, he remained here for some time. His experience at Antioch did not cause him to deviate from his customary rule of making the first appeal to the Jews. He availed himself of the synagogue meetings at Iconium, and had great success both with the Jews and with men of other nationalities. But the old dispute broke out again, for it was impossible to disguise

the real tendency of the principles which he enunciated. The supporters of the Old Religion were quick to perceive that the two systems could not live together. It became a civic quarrel at Iconium, and the citizens took sides with the Apostles and the authorities of the synagogue. The phrasing which the author of the Acts employs is noteworthy as showing the distinction between the Christian teachers and the Jews. Paul and Barnabas, a Levite and a Benjamite, are no longer considered as Jews. "Part held with the Jews and part with the Apostles." A violent attack was made on the innovators both by Jews and Gentiles, and they were compelled to flee eastward into Lycaonia. Here they visited the towns of Derbe and Lystra in a wilder part of the country, the latter town being the outermost fortress which Augustus had established in these parts to overawe the savage tribes of the Taurus.

Lystra is remarkable as having witnessed a scene which gives us an interesting glimpse into the heathen beliefs of the populace. The occasion of the outburst of pagan feeling was a miracle of healing. The susceptibilities of the excited mob were so powerfully worked upon by the cure that they immediately concluded that the gods in the guise of mortals had come to their city. It is not by chance that the incident occurs at this point of the journey. The country in which the Apostles were travelling is immortalized as the home of one of the most touching stories of antiquity, of which the central

idea was a visit of gods disguised as men. The story clung to the soil, and nothing could be more intelligible than the mistake of the worthy folk of Lystra. The old fable ran that Jupiter and Mercury, who had been wandering through Phrygia in the likeness of men, were refused hospitality at every house they approached until they came to the home of an aged couple remarkable for their mutual love, Baucis and Philemon. These old people received their unexpected guests with simple friendliness, and when they departed next morning were induced to accompany them part of the way. On arriving at a hill-side they looked back and saw that the valley was covered with water, and that the race of inhospitable churls had been exterminated. They looked for their own cottage, but it too had disappeared. In its place they beheld a magnificent temple. The gods, who now stood confessed, encouraged the old people to ask for anything they desired. But the faithful pair had no other wish to express than that they might act as guardians of the temple and cease to live at the same moment. So the two were undivided in death. Philemon was changed into an oak and Baucis into a linden.

When the paralysed man was seen to walk, the multitude was seized with the conviction that this was another celestial visitation. Never again should the gods depart from their territory without due reverence. Barnabas, who was silent and reserved while the leader was present, is on this account

regarded by the mob as the more important, and is quickly identified with Jupiter; Paul, impetuous and speaking eagerly, is taken to be Mercury. Everybody who knows how long a story haunts a countryside will understand the choice of names. In their excitement the people had dropped their acquired Greek and fallen back upon the native language, with the result that the Apostles were quite in the dark as to what was happening. But when the priest from the temple of Jupiter, which was before the city gates, was seen approaching, bringing oxen decked with garlands, to offer such sacrifices as beseemed their immortal guests, the truth at last burst upon them.

Horrified at the mistake, the Apostles speedily convinced their would-be worshippers that they were really human beings, of like passions with themselves. In his harangue to the excited mob, St. Paul, whose armoury was stored with weapons for every emergency, falls back upon natural religion and the Stoic tenets with which he had been familiar from early days. His address, while instinct with the vital truth of religion, is entirely without a reference to Christ.

But there was little reliance to be placed on the many-headed. Jews from Antioch and Iconium, hatred, like love, making light of distance, dogged the Apostle's steps and worked on the feelings of the simple and uncivilized people to such purpose, that they stoned the man they had just attempted to worship. There is evidence to show that in

antiquity the people of Iconium had a reputation for fickleness, but if such revulsions of feeling are to be rigorously counted, there are perhaps few peoples which would escape a similar imputation. Stoning was not an experience a man could forget if he wished. The memory remained in the Apostle's mind, as the scars on his body, and could not fail to stir a bitter recollection of a similar stoning which had a different sort of ending, and of which the violence he suffered was nothing but the just Nemesis (Acts vii.).

A visit in this district in a later year brought the Apostle into contact with a young man who afterwards became an important assistant in the work. Timothy may have been an eye-witness of this outrage. Lystra was his native town. In a letter written at the end of his life the Apostle appeals to his knowledge of the afflictions which befell him here (2 Tim. iii. 11). There is something moving in the idea of the thoughts of master and disciple travelling back to early days and verifying the fact that the law of the whole had been suffering.

The Apostles made their way to Derbe, which was the most easterly town of the province; and from that point they retrace their steps, although, as a glance at the map will show, by continuing their route to the east, they would soon have arrived at Tarsus and St. Paul's home country. The time of year was probably unfavourable for the passage of the Cilician Gates, or perhaps the Apostle wished to strengthen his hold on the newly-evangelized districts. However this may have been, they turned

on their tracks, and when they had once more come south of the Taurus, they preached at Perga, which had previously been neglected on account of Mark's departure. On their arrival in Pamphylia they had sailed up the Cestius as far as Perga, but they did not embark here on their departure. They went on by foot to Attalia, a port on the seashore which, as is indicated by its name, was founded by one of the Attalic kings. His full name was Attalus Philadelphus, and the city mentioned in the Revelation (iii. 7) was also called after him. From this town they set sail to the Syrian Antioch, whence they had set out, laden with fresh stories of the success with which the Gospel made its way among men who had no drop of Jewish blood in their veins. Here was a narrative at which the most unenlightened lingerer in the old paths would find it difficult to cavil. In the face of such accumulations of evidence it was no longer possible to doubt that a door of faith had been opened to the Gentiles.

It is assumed throughout that the churches mentioned in this journey are those to which the Epistle to the Galatians was written. But it is right to inform the reader that one of the most warmly-debated questions connected with St. Paul's life is whether this view, called the South Galatian theory, is correct, or we should assume that the Apostle penetrated into the interior of Asia Minor and preached to the Celtic tribes which had settled there, with Ancyra for their capital.

VIII

JERUSALEM

But there are always men who will resist the spirit of progress even when it is invested with the authority of Christ Himself. The rearguard which checks the advance of an enemy is in a position of honour. But the spirit which animates the resistance of those who endeavour to oppose the advance of humanity contains nothing to win our admiration. Selfishness and the inability to entertain a large idea are its component parts. In every department of human activity, whether it be literature, music, painting, medicine, science or politics, progress can only be achieved in the face of determined opposition ; but nowhere is the fight so fierce and prolonged as in the sphere of religion. Fortunately, in spite of the number of opponents, it has been ordained that the path of humanity should be one of progress.

The most important crisis of the Apostle's life now drew on ; the very existence of the work to which he had given his life was threatened ; he fought with all his might for the principles in which he believed, but although he was victorious at the moment, the hostility of his enemies pursued him till the day of his death.

The revolutionary proceedings at Antioch soon attracted unfavourable attention at Jerusalem. The Jews of the Syrian city had strange reports to send to their brethren of the south of Gentiles who were admitted without restriction to the privileges which belonged to the sons of Abraham ; nay, worse, that there were Jews, unworthy of the name, who encouraged this spirit of slackness and were actually prepared to associate on familiar terms with men who were not Jews. In this way the news reached the church at Jerusalem and inflamed the fanatical section, the members of which could hardly be distinguished from unconverted Jews. They were members of the political party of the Zealots, who were already fanning the flames of the rebellion which was to break out twenty years later. Their desperate resistance to the Roman legions when the war began was sustained by the rallying cry of fidelity to the law. It was the same motto which goaded them on to their conflict with the Christians at Antioch. The Jews they regarded as degenerate scions of the stock of Israel for their latitudinarian principles, while they declared in uncompromising language their opinion of Gentile Christians. On their arrival at the city on the Orontes they were by no means content to confine their invective to the people of their own nationality. They declared in the most assured manner that a Gentile Christian who had not submitted to the rite of circumcision could not be saved (Acts xv.).

St. Paul was not of a temperament to submit

tamely to such a challenge. Had it been allowed to pass, the work among the Gentiles would have been permanently crippled. The emissaries from Jerusalem were certain to meet with a robust reception at Antioch, the centre of Gentile Christianity; and Paul and Barnabas the champions of the right of the non-Jewish peoples to a free and untrammelled access to Christ entered into prolonged and heated arguments with the zealots of the Law. But the conviction soon grew up in the Apostle's mind that the reactionary spirit could only be successfully combated in Jerusalem, the place of its origin. Accordingly, a band of delegates, with Paul and Barnabas at the head, was appointed to travel to Palestine, and to confront the forces of obscurantism in the capital.

On their way to the south the company passed through Phœnicia and Samaria spreading everywhere the news that it was possible to become a Christian without first of all becoming a Jew (Acts xv. 3). In each of these districts the way for the proclamation of a message so incredible to a Jew had been prepared by the Master Himself. In spite of the fact that He limited His personal mission to the Jews, He granted the prayer of the Syrophœnician woman on the only occasion so far as our records show on which He trod on Gentile territory. St. Mark draws attention explicitly to the fact that the woman was a Gentile, a Greek (Mark vii. 26). And in Samaria it was to a woman, which in itself was sufficiently offensive to Jewish ideas, that He revealed the fact that the ideally

true worship of God depended on the spirit of the worshipper, and in no respect on his nationality (John iv. 23). Here are two incidents which declare without any shadow of ambiguity that the barriers of sex and nationality, which had been thrown up by the Jewish spirit of particularism, must be swept away before the rise of the spirit of comprehension and progress which is the essential sign of Christianity. It was a coincidence of the happiest augury for the success of the expedition to Jerusalem.

The meeting, described in Acts xv., which took place to discuss this matter is generally styled the Council of Jerusalem. The title is an anachronism, and is also unfortunate because it suggests an analogy which does not exist between this informal conference of a single congregation and the formal and formidable councils of a later period.

Up to this point we have followed the account of the crisis given in the Acts. But we cannot sufficiently congratulate ourselves that we have a history of the mission from Antioch written from the point of view of St. Paul himself. The story of the Acts was written a long time after the events by one who had to depend on the reports of others. St. Paul relates the history with the sure touch of one who himself took the leading part in the occurrences he narrates.

We owe St. Paul's description of what happened at Jerusalem to the pertinacity of his opponents. Although they were discomfited on this occasion,

they never abandoned the attack. Four or five years later they made a raid on the churches which the Apostle had founded in South Galatia, and created such havoc that St. Paul writes them a letter which is remarkable as being the only one from his pen in which there is no word of affectionate congratulation at the beginning. He immediately breaks into stern reproof of their desertion of the Gospel of Liberty as he had proclaimed it in Galatia. "I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel" (Gal. i. 6).

The deadliest weapon in the armoury of the Judaizers was the fact that St. Paul had not seen Christ. In season and out of season they depreciated his authority as compared with the standing of the original Apostles at Jerusalem, who had conversed on familiar terms with the Master during His public ministry. With all the varieties of application which their bitter hatred suggested they drove home with triumphant force their argument that a teacher like St. Paul, who had never heard the words of Christ, could only have derived his Gospel at second hand from those who were not so unfortunately circumstanced as himself. Few readers of the New Testament understand what an isolated figure the Apostle presents in the history of primitive Christianity, and how much there was connected with his activity which called for explanation. To us who read the story of his life as told by a biographer who was in close sympathy with his views, with the

conversion narrated in its proper place, and the significance which it possessed for the Apostle fully described, all seems to be plain. But everything which we take for granted concerning the Apostle was stoutly denied in the first century. His enemies found abundant opportunity for attack. He called himself an "apostle" indeed, but what credentials could he produce? The original number of twelve had been completed by the selection of Matthias, who had been appointed, as was fitting, in solemn and formal manner by the laying on of the hands of the remainder of the Apostolic band. Could St. Paul point to any ceremony like this? On his own showing he had carefully avoided even a meeting with the original Apostles. What right had he either to the name or the office? The mockery with which his foes would refer to the fantastic mid-day vision outside Damascus on which he sought to base his authority will readily be understood. This is the attack which St. Paul had to meet in Galatia, and in order to refute the assertions of his unscrupulous opponents he recounts the history of his early relation to Christianity.

Hence arises the autobiographical interest of the Epistle to the Galatians. It is St. Paul's *apologia pro vita sua*. In the very forefront of his reply he places an emphatic denial that he is indebted to any man for the Gospel that he preached. It came to him through revelation of Jesus Christ; but from no human being, neither from the Apostles at Jerusalem, nor from others (Gal. i. 11, 12). He establishes the

truth of this statement by an appeal to two indisputable facts. The first is that after his conversion he did not discuss the matter with any human being: "I conferred not with flesh and blood"; it did not occur to him to go up to Jerusalem to those who were Apostles before him; he spent his time in the wilds of Arabia, pondering the revelation in his own heart, and then he returned not to Jerusalem, but to Damascus, where he had been baptized by Ananias (Gal. i. 16, 17). The second fact is that it was only after the space of three years that he went to Jerusalem; and then not to learn about the New Religion, but simply to make the acquaintance of Peter. The only other Apostle he saw was James, the Lord's brother. His visit only lasted a fortnight (Gal. i. 18).

The Apostle is so determined to assert his independence of the original Apostles at Jerusalem that he takes a solemn oath before God that he is not lying in what he states. After this flying visit to Jerusalem he returned to Syria and Cilicia, spending most of his time, as we may conjecture, in their capitals, Antioch and Tarsus his birthplace. He had so little to do with the church in Judæa that they were absolutely unacquainted with his personal appearance. The people of the south had only heard rumours that the persecutor had become a propagator of the faith of which he once made havoc. They glorified God for this knowledge, unlike the fanatical emissaries who were now traducing the Apostle in Galatia.

It was only after an interval of fourteen years, an enormous gap in this period of a man's life, that St. Paul again visited Jerusalem. So that, with the exception of the fortnight's visit to Jerusalem, during the seventeen years since his conversion, the years from thirty to forty-seven, the most important in a lifetime, he had been entirely out of touch with events and personalities in Palestine. With this sweeping refutation of the calumnies of his opponents he turns to deal with the events of this visit, which are also related in Acts xv. In his eagerness to arrive at the crisis the Apostle omits to mention the city from which he began his journey. He merely states that he went up to Jerusalem and that his companions were Barnabas and Titus (Gal. ii. 1). Barnabas was a Jew, a Levite, high in reputation with the orthodox at Jerusalem. He was a native of the island of Cyprus (Acts iv. 36), and, therefore, like St. Paul, a Jew of the Dispersion. He was thoroughly identified with the work among the non-Jewish peoples. He had stood by the Apostle's side in a previous crisis of his life (Acts ix. 27), and his presence with him during the uncertainties of the negotiations at Jerusalem would be a valuable reinforcement to one so impressionable as the Apostle. Neither of them foresaw the dispute which was shortly to put an end to their friendship.

Titus, who is mentioned for the first time in New Testament history in this passage of Galatians, was not a Jew. He was a Gentile, but it is impossible to determine of what nationality ; for although his

name is Roman, this is a circumstance from which nothing can be concluded. His presence with the party announced the Apostle's firm determination to " carry the war into Africa."

St. Paul, who relates the history of the affair as it appeared to one on the inside, informs us that he went up by revelation ; that is, that an overwhelming conviction had grown up in his heart that Jerusalem was the only battlefield on which a decisive victory could be gained. On arrival at the city, the Apostle, who thoroughly understood that it was a question of nothing less than the future of Christianity, not to speak of the success of his life's work, determined to have a private interview with the men who seemed to be the leaders of thought in the capital before entrusting himself and his cause to the uncertainties and passions of a public meeting. The cause of Gentile Christianity must not be imperilled by unskilful handling. These leaders, who are termed " men of repute " and " pillars " were James, Cephas (Peter), and John—two of them original Apostles of the Master, the other His brother. St. Paul laid before these men of influence in Jerusalem a complete account of the nature of the work among the Gentiles, and the success by which it had been attended. None of these Jerusalem " pillars " had been outside Palestine : they had the vaguest notion of the extent of the Empire : they would hardly have known the names of many of the nationalities about which St. Paul spoke. But the story of his labours left

no doubt upon their minds that the Spirit was working in foreign countries as evidently as in Judæa. They determined to recognize the work of this unofficial missionary, and an agreement is reached by which St. Paul is to devote himself to the work abroad while they attend to affairs at home. "When they perceived the grace that was given unto me, James and Cephas and John, they who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision." The result of this private conference, then, was that the Jews, whether they lived at home or abroad, were left to the care of the original Apostles; while the Gentiles or non-Jewish peoples were the particular charge of St. Paul.

The attitude of the original Apostles when viewed in the light of history is disappointing. St. Paul, however, regarded it as encouraging; and no doubt from his point of view it was of the utmost importance that his work should be recognized by the leaders of the Jewish Church. But while this expression of approval and recognition is intelligible to us on the part of James, we should have expected that Peter and John, men who had been trained by the Master Himself, would show a spirit of larger enterprise. They did not appear to have any sense of the importance or magnitude of the work among the nations of the Empire; they have no conception that it is a work in which they will be called one day to engage; they are kindled to no great enthusiasm

by the thought of the Gentile Mission; they are content to extend to it an official recognition. Twenty years after the Master's death His words, "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations," or as it might be equally well translated, "all the Gentiles," show little sign of bearing fruit among His personal followers.

But still St. Paul had won the leaders over to his side, and was consequently in a much stronger position to face the public meeting of the church, in which his opponents would have the opportunity to stir up the passions of fanaticism and ignorance. They lose no time in opening their attack. With all their force they urge the demand that Titus should be circumcised. This was the moment for which St. Paul had waited. It was with this object he had brought Titus to Jerusalem. Here was a Gentile who had been admitted to full rights in Christianity, in entire disregard of the ceremonial law and of circumcision. His presence in Jerusalem was a challenge which rendered evasion impossible, and was due to St. Paul's determination to force matters to a crisis. The leaders of the fanatical party, as he had foreseen, raised the cry that the Christianity of Titus was irregular; that he must become a Jew and recognize the law. All their fury was directed against Paul, the apostate Rabbi, who brought the Law into contempt among the Gentiles.

This is the supreme moment, and St. Paul's attitude was grand. It is an attack on Christian liberty by men whom he denounces as false brethren. In

circumstances like these he will not retreat an inch. He faces the excited enthusiasts with an unruffled front; not for a moment will he yield to their demands; their interpretation of the Law is slavery; Christianity is liberty (Gal. ii. 5).

Thus St. Paul confronted the reactionary party on their own ground. In their attack on him they no doubt expected the sympathy, if not the active co-operation, of St. James; but St. Paul had avoided this danger by his private meeting with the pillar Apostles. His victory was complete. He had asserted in the most public manner that the Gentile Christians were entirely independent of Judaism. He drove home this fact by the production of Titus. He had vindicated the liberty of the Gospel; but his opponents never forgave him. He in his turn does not spare them. False brethren, he terms them, who had come in, in an underhand fashion, to spy out the liberty of the Gentiles. But their enmity knew no rest. It was four years after these events at Jerusalem that St. Paul wrote his letter to Galatia. We learn from it all too clearly the damage they had done to his work in the south of Asia Minor.

It was with the activity of these fanatical legalists in view that St. Paul told the Galatians the story of his second visit to Jerusalem. They told the Galatians that St. Paul had no authority which could be compared to the authority of the pillar Apostles at Jerusalem. He could only have learned about Christianity by hearsay; they were the disciples of Christ. In view of this St. Paul does not omit to

make much of his independence of the original Apostles. He fully recognizes their position of influence in Jerusalem ; but Jerusalem was not the world, and while he recognizes their standing he does not show himself unduly impressed by it. " Whatsoever they were it maketh no matter to me : God accepteth not man's person." The irregularities in his language reveal vividly the excitement working in his breast as he meditates his response. Once more he insists that the Gospel he preaches among the Gentiles was imparted to him by no man ; not even by the Apostles of Christ. " They who were of repute imparted nothing to me " (Gal. ii. 6). It was he who had told them marvels of the new nations pressing into Christianity. And he left Jerusalem, hampered by no restrictions in his work ; asked simply to do what lay in his power to help the poor people in the city (Gal. ii. 10). We shall see later how he endeavoured to meet this request.

The sequel of this story was played out at Antioch. The recital of the wonders accomplished in this city worked on the imagination of St. Peter, and he determined to pay a visit to the capital of Syria. It must have been a startling event in his life. A simple Galilæan fisherman, his latest expedition had been a tour in the midlands of Palestine which had led him as far as Cæsarea on the coast (Acts ix. and x.) But not even the wonders of the Roman capital of Palestine would have prepared him for the sights of the beautiful and vicious city on the Orontes. It came to him as a revelation. But when he saw the

power of the Gospel over the pagan inhabitants of the luxurious town he was fired with the greatest enthusiasm. He threw aside his Jewish prejudices in a moment. He joined with the Gentiles in worship; he joined with them at meals. He was swept from his feet. It was a wonderful step for the Apostle to take, and it must have brought joy to the heart of St. Paul. Here was a visible sign or sacrament of the unity of Jew and Gentile in Christ. It was a prophecy of the universal Church of the seventh chapter of the Revelation.

But this idyll was rudely disturbed. St. James also was interested in matters at Antioch; he may have heard of the unaccountable behaviour of St. Peter. It was one thing to recognize the work of others among the Gentiles; it was entirely a different matter to throw off Jewish customs and live as a Gentile. Whatever was the origin of their mission, and they do not seem to have come in an entirely friendly spirit, certain people from James arrived at Antioch. Their arrival had a disastrous effect on St. Peter's conduct. He is sharply brought to earth. How could he face St. James, how could he meet his friends at Jerusalem, if this story should come to be known? He immediately broke off social intercourse with the Gentiles and relapsed into his customary habits of Jewish exclusiveness. This extraordinary conduct revealed the underlying weakness of the Jerusalem concordat. It was in essence an agreement that the original Apostles should confine themselves to the propagation of Christianity

among the Jews ; while St. Paul and his followers should work among the Gentiles. But in towns like Antioch, where there were large numbers both of Jewish and Gentile Christians, the two spheres overlapped. St. Peter was the first to step outside the limits of the Jerusalem arrangement, since he associated with the Gentiles at meals, an unprecedented action on the part of a strict Jew. But on the appearance of the delegates from Jerusalem he at once withdrew from this position, and for the future associated with the Jews alone—in the words of St. Paul, " fearing them who were of the circumcision." The inevitable result was that the church at Antioch was split into two factions, the Jewish section implying by the attitude it adopted that its members were conscious of some considerable superiority over the Gentile believers. St. Peter's example was all-powerful, and the Jews rallied to his side. Even Barnabas, who had fought side by side with St. Paul from the day that the first step had been taken, was carried away by their dissimulation and deserted his comrade (Gal. ii. 13). Their Jewish prejudices are too strong for their newly-found religion. They are unable to treat the Gentiles as brethren.

The Jews of Antioch were now drawn up in a solid phalanx ; no Gentile might come within the charmed circle. But there was one Jew whom they had left out of account. This was not conduct which St. Paul could tolerate. His indignation caught fire at the treatment meted out to the Gentile converts,

and the more exclusive the attitude of the Jews the more fierce became his determination to assert at all costs the fundamental unity of all Christians in Christ, irrespective of their nationality. It was no time for irresolution or the choice of gentle words. The future of Gentile Christianity was at stake. St. Paul rose to the height of his genius, and showed the swift and amazing capacity for decision which marks a Mirabeau or a Napoleon. He alone remained faithful to the cause of Christ and progress, and he does not spare those who failed. He charges St. Peter with fear and dissimulation or, as the word is always translated in the New Testament, and as it should be translated in this case, since it gives St. Paul's meaning, hypocrisy. These charges were driven home by St. Paul at the public meeting of the church called to discuss the question ("before them all"), and the champion of the Gentiles does not hesitate to resist St. Peter to the face since he had stultified himself by his conduct. "I resisted him to the face, because he stood condemned" (Gal. ii. 11).

The breach at Antioch throws a flood of light upon St. Paul's independence of the original Apostles, and his determination to maintain the cause of Gentile liberty. He does not tell us the result of his stand, and his silence is significant. If he had been victorious he would probably have mentioned the fact. He put to St. Peter a question which admitted of no reply. "If thou, being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles and not as do the Jews, how com-

pellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews ? " But the force of the early associations of Judaism was too powerful to be withstood. St. Peter retreated to his side of the agreement and remained there. The time was not yet come when he should write a letter to the Christians of Asia Minor (1 Pet. i. 1). He probably returned to Jerusalem, while St. Paul did his best to repair the mischief caused at Antioch before starting on another journey.

It is interesting to compare the narrative in the Acts with St. Paul's account in Galatians (Acts xv.). The differences between the two are so great that every possible device to bring them into harmony has already been suggested and discussed to the verge of weariness. Readers who desire full information must be referred to the commentaries. It will be sufficient to observe that the difference in outlook is explained by the consideration that the report in Galatians was written from the inside, within a few years, by one who had been a principal actor in the events he relates. The story in the Acts comes from one who was not present at Jerusalem, wrote long after the event, was dependent on the information of others, and probably penned his account at a time when, the influence of the Jewish Church in Palestine having been sadly diminished by the catastrophes of the war with Rome and the destruction of Jerusalem, the memory of the sharp divisions caused in earlier times by the Jewish question had largely died out, and Gentile Christians were in an overwhelming majority.

Instead of Peter's visit to Antioch we read of the letter sent "from the Apostles and elder brethren unto the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia." The pretensions of the formalists are thrown over, and no other burden is laid on the Gentiles than the observance of what the Jews knew as the Noachic covenant. They are urged to abstain from things sacrificed to idols, from blood, from things strangled and from fornication. The letter is distributed among the Gentile Christians of the home province; but it is certain that when St. Paul went out into the Empire he did not hold himself bound by it. He advises the Christians in Corinth to buy any meat which is exposed for sale in the market without asking the question whether it had been used in the temple services (1 Cor. x. 25).

The speeches also in the Acts are interesting. As usual they are merely scanty abstracts of what was said. The Acts knows nothing about the attitude of St. John, who is not mentioned. St. James shows himself to be entirely on the side of Gentile Christianity, and quotes a difficult passage from the Old Testament to show that the influx of the Gentiles was in accordance with the divine will. St. Peter makes it quite clear that the mission to the Gentiles has received divine sanction by the baptism of Cornelius, while the concluding words of his speech might almost have been spoken by St. Paul himself.

These are some of the chief facts in this great controversy. Like many important parts of the Apostle's teaching, this significant piece of history

owes its preservation to the unscrupulousness of his enemies. They had made an incursion into Galatia and were endeavouring to sweep his Gentile converts into Judaism. Their argument was cogent; Judaism went back to Moses; this sect was but of a day. St. Paul goes to the root of the matter in his letter. There can be no *via media;* the choice is clear between Judaism and Christianity. But if the Gentiles accept the Old Religion he declares in some of the most startling words in the New Testament that Christ shall profit them nothing. It is not possible for language to express more forcibly the incompatibility of the old and the new. For St. Paul the men who accept the old are severed from Christ, they are fallen from grace (Gal. v. 2—4).

IX

MACEDONIA

Some short time after the stirring events at Antioch, St. Paul proposed to Barnabas that they should visit together the churches which they had founded on their journey through Galatia. The plan broke down on the question of Mark. St. Paul refused to travel in the company of the man who had failed him in Pamphylia ; while Barnabas was naturally anxious that his nephew should be given another chance. When men of the temperament of the Apostles quarrel they do so thoroughly ; their friendship was wrecked. It is a specially sad episode in the Apostolic history, because there was no man living to whom St. Paul owed more than he did to Barnabas. We do not know whether the two ever met again. St. Mark was with the Apostle during his first imprisonment at Rome (Col. iv. 10) ; and at the end of his life, St. Paul summoned him to his side in the capital, and for the same purposes as he had employed him on the first Galatian journey and refused to take him on the second (2 Tim. iv. 11).

The result of the quarrel was that two missionary journeys were undertaken. The uncle and nephew travelled to Cyprus, the homeland of Barnabas ; while Paul chose as his companion Silas, or to give

his name in its uncontracted form, Silvanus, one of the two who had been sent to Antioch by the Apostles at Jerusalem (Acts xv. 27).

He first wandered through the home countries, Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches. He then crossed the Taurus range through the Cilician gates, and, entering South Galatia, comes first to Derbe (xvi. 1), which was the last town he had visited on his previous journey (xiv. 20). Then he was travelling eastwards, now to the west. Passing on to Lystra, he found a young man who became one of his most valued assistants. Timothy was the offspring of a mixed marriage. Unlike St. Paul, who was a Hebrew of Hebrews, his father was a Gentile, but of what nationality we are not informed. As Timothy was partly a Jew, he undergoes the rite which St. Paul had refused to allow in the case of Titus the Gentile.

The geographical particulars which are given of the next stage in the journey will lose their formidable appearance when it is borne in mind that the Apostle was being guided to Troas. This was the port of departure for Macedonia, and the provinces of Macedonia and Achaia, although this fact was not as yet known to the Apostle, were the objective of the second missionary journey. Accordingly we are told that they passed through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, which was in great part the country north of the Taurus range, which he had traversed on the previous journey. If he had continued along this line he would have arrived at

Asia, the wealthiest province of the Empire. But they were forbidden to speak the word in Asia. Their only resource was to turn to the north and endeavour to reach Bithynia and the provinces round the Black Sea. But when they arrived as far as Mysia, the Spirit of Jesus did not suffer them to go into Bithynia. As there would be little profit in a journey to the interior, where the Græco-Roman civilization had not made much progress, the Apostle turned to the north-west, and arrived at the maritime city of Troas, situated in a district which has been rendered immortal by the verse of Homer and Virgil.

The first visit to Troas is remarkable for the vision of the man of Macedonia, and also because the first of the so-called " we-sections " occurs here. In these sections the use of the first personal pronoun shows that the author is travelling in the company of the Apostle. For example, in verse ten we have " straightway we sought to go forth into Macedonia." The first section extends as far as verse seventeen in this chapter ; another may be seen in xx. 5—xxi. 18 ; the last is the journey to Rome, xxvii. 1—xxviii. 16. It is impossible here to enter into all the questions as to the authorship of the Acts which are raised by the occurrence of these passages. There is an earlier we-section in the Western text of the Acts.

Assuming the author of the we-sections to be St. Luke, an interesting explanation of the vision has been suggested. It is possible that St. Luke was a Macedonian. According to the indications afforded

by the pronoun he remained in Macedonia on this occasion; and the references to Philippi are sometimes taken to betray the local pride of the inhabitant. There is an ecclesiastical tradition of no great importance to the effect that he was a native of Antioch, but there is not the slightest reason to suppose that the Apostle had met the future Evangelist before this occasion at Troas. If St. Luke were a Macedonian and had been speaking to the traveller he had encountered about affairs in the province at the other side of the Ægean, it is possible to understand how the vision came to St. Paul that night. His imagination had been stirred by the events of the day, and the stranger who had crossed his path voices the Apostle's own desire to preach the Gospel in "the regions beyond." The call came in the famous words, "Come over into Macedonia and help us." St. Luke is only mentioned three times in the New Testament (Col. iv. 14; 2 Tim. iv. 11; Philem. 24); and from the reference in Colossians we gather that he was a physician. It has been suggested that he practised in the ships that plied across the Ægean.

As a result of the vision no doubt as to his destination remained in the Apostle's mind; and when the party sailed from Troas it included a new member, the author of the we-sections. It now numbered, with the inclusion of Timothy and Luke, four in all. The voyage to Macedonia occupied part of two days; the ship calling at the island of Samothracia, which has the honour of being

mentioned by Homer, who says that from it the battlefields of Troy can be viewed. On the next day they arrived at the Macedonian port of Neapolis or Newtown, which was the port for Philippi.

Macedonia, which has occupied the attention of Europe for decades, was when the Apostle visited it simply a province of the Empire. But in earlier times it had itself been the seat of a mighty Empire. It was Philip of Macedon who overthrew the political independence of Greece; the thunders of Demosthenes were unavailing to arouse a democracy to a sense of military insecurity, and at Chæronea, Greece, the mother of the liberal arts, passed under the sway of Macedon. His son Alexander united the Greeks against their hereditary Oriental enemies, and in a succession of victories reduced the Empire of Persia beneath the Macedonian authority, and pushed the frontier of his Empire as far as India. The two Macedonian churches to which St. Paul wrote letters testify by their names to their connection with this royal family. The gold mines which enabled Philip to prosecute his designs against Greece lay close to Philippi, the town which bore his name, while Thessalonica was called after a half sister of Alexander the Great. But in the first century of the Christian era the Macedonian Empire was merely a memory. Rome was the universal legatee.

It has been argued from the manner in which Philippi is mentioned that the author of the we-sections was a native of the town. We are told that it was the first city of the district, and the fact of its

being a Roman colony is not omitted. The first of these references is probably aimed at the more influential Thessalonica, which was practically the capital of the province, and is quite in the spirit of rivalry which occupied many provincial towns in the first century as in the twentieth. There is abundant evidence from coins and inscriptions to show how cities drew attention to their own importance by the titles which they bestowed on themselves. As for the second, there are several Roman colonies mentioned in the Acts, but in no other instance is our attention drawn to the fact.

St. Paul was destined on this journey to work in two countries which had been independent sovereign powers. Macedonia had been merely a military empire, but Greece was the nurse of civilization. They were now simply provinces of the Roman Empire ; Macedonia retained its ancient name, but Greece was known as Achaia.

The Macedonian churches were the bright feature in St. Paul's work. After the contest in Jerusalem the obscurantist Jewish party, although vanquished for the moment, determined to carry the war into the enemy's country. St. Paul's appearance in Jerusalem taught them precedents which were dangerous. They had no difficulty in identifying him as their most formidable opponent ; he was the only Jew who had stood out at Antioch. They therefore determined to pay particular attention to the countries in which he had been active. We find that after their successful raid on Antioch (Gal. ii.) it was not long

before they made an appearance in Galatia. We have already noticed the arguments they used and the success that attended their efforts. In order to win his converts back to the principles of Christian liberty St. Paul had to write his Galatian letter. But the emissaries of an unprogressive Judaism did not turn to the north as the Apostle had done. They followed the direct east and west line which ran through Galatia, Asia, and Achaia. It is due to this fact that we find only very slight traces of their activity in Macedonia, while in Galatia and Achaia they almost drove the Apostle to desperation. The other side of this fact is that the Macedonian churches, and Philippi in particular, were specially dear to the Apostle. Writing to them he could throw aside all restraints, and speak without fear of being misunderstood. Hence the peculiar charm of the Philippian letter.

The opening of the Apostle's work at Philippi brought him into conflict with the authorities and held no promise of any very successful future. A miserable slave-girl who was believed to be a medium served her masters as a reliable means of extracting coins from the wondering rustics who thronged the town on market days and when the assizes were held. In a similar spirit of gain Trinculo reflects when he catches sight of Caliban, "Were I in England now not a holiday fool but would give a piece of silver." When the girl was restored to her normal condition the masters in exasperation hurried the Apostle before the Roman officials. It was manifestly a case

of interference with business, and this was the only ground on which the Imperial authorities at this period interfered with the Christian preaching. But in spite of this, there is an air of irregularity about the whole proceedings. The prætors, as they are called, held their court in the *agora*, and it would seem to have been a court of summary jurisdiction. The Apostle's case comes up as one of a number of sordid matters likely to engage the attention of such a tribunal; and the harried magistrates settled it out of hand—property on one side, unknown busybodies on the other, their course is clear; accordingly the preachers suffer.

It is easy to understand the panic which seized these worthy officials next day. The men whom they had scourged as sturdy vagabonds were citizens of Rome. This was enough to bring terror to the heart of the official who had erred. To flog a citizen was a crime. The prætors bitterly regretted the hasty and irregular trial, and were unreservedly eager to induce the Apostle to leave their jurisdiction.

The important fact to remember about Philippi is that it was a Roman colony. In other words, it was a part of Rome itself, with all its customs and institutions, set up in the midst of an alien population which it was intended to overawe. The population of a colony was to a large extent composed of veterans of the legions; the names of the members were still inscribed on the lists of the tribes in the capital; Latin was the tongue universally used. It was, so far as circumstances allowed, a close imitation of

Rome itself. The governors of colonies were properly entitled Duumviri ; but they soon began to call themselves prætors, a title which really belonged to the magistrates at Rome ; even the all-important head of an Imperial province was only styled pro-prætor. But the governors of the colonies preferred the resounding title; the custom spread ; and it is this title which is given in the Acts to the magistrates of Philippi.

It was this circumstance which allowed the masters of the girl to prosecute the Apostle. They were uncertain whether their claim for damages could be sustained ; but Philippi was a colony and governed by Roman laws. One of the strictest of these was directed against the importation of foreign religions, although an exception was made in certain cases, particularly in favour of Judaism. On this point his accusers bent all their efforts, and asserted that he had introduced customs which it was unlawful for members of a Roman colony to observe (21). The prætors, to allow them their courtesy title, spent little time in investigating the matter. The case seemed to be simple and the lictors were commanded to carry out the scourging.

Bruised as they were as the result of punishment of which it is fortunate that we can form no conception to-day, the prisoners were further tortured by the constrained position in which they were confined in the prison. It was not on philosophy that they fell back for consolation in their wretched plight, but on the presence of Christ. At

midnight, when the earthquake occurred, the other prisoners were listening to the sound of hymns and praises, a sound without parallel in a Roman dungeon. Next morning the magistrates, uncomfortably conscious of the irregularity of their proceedings, sent to order the release of the prisoners. The gaoler, transformed from a heartless official into a willing friend, was eager to speed the departure of his involuntary guests. But it does not please St. Paul that matters should terminate in this fashion. He is thinking, not of the affront offered to himself, but of the injury done to his mission. He sends back a message that Roman citizens had been scourged, and that the magistrates must make amends. It is easy to imagine the consternation with which these officials were seized when they realized that their hastiness had caused them to be guilty of so great an enormity. The Apostle was not a helpless provincial, as they had been led to suppose, but was invested with the immunities conferred by the Roman franchise. There was nothing the prætors would not do in order to see these men safely out of their jurisdiction.

They left the prison for the house of Lydia. She was a wealthy woman from Thyatira in Asia, on the other side of the Ægean (Rev. ii. 18—29). Her native town had been celebrated since the time of Homer for the magnificence of its purple dyes. Lydia was engaged in this trade, and had either settled in Philippi or was a frequent visitor to the town with a permanent residence there. To the

Macedonians and the Roman colonists she was a foreigner, and when she first appeared in Philippi she was referred to as the Lydian, Lydia being the name of the country in which Thyatira was situated. In time this designation superseded her personal name, which has been entirely lost, and she appears in the Acts as Lydia.

The number of Jews in Philippi was so small that there was no synagogue in the town, and on the Saturday after their arrival, the Apostles had wandered out by the banks of the river in the hope of finding a *proseucha*, or place of prayer. Oratories of this kind were open to the sky and of considerable extent. Here by the waterside they discovered a congregation of Jewish worshippers, most of them, like Lydia, proselytes, to whom they preached.

Philippi is celebrated in history as the scene of the battle in which the republican forces under Brutus and Cassius made their last stand against Antony and Octavian. Fate was against the republicans; even the assassination of Cæsar did not suffice to prevent the advent of the Empire, and the doom of their cause was irrevocably sealed by the blunders and disasters of the plains of Philippi. Cassius sought his end, and Brutus, "the noblest Roman of them all," killed himself by falling on his sword. The battle, or rather the twin battles, were fought in 42 B.C.

Passing by Amphipolis and Apollonia, they arrived at Thessalonica, a journey of about a hundred miles

from Philippi. Here St. Paul found himself under a jurisdiction that was completely different from that of Philippi. Philippi was a military colony; Thessalonica a free city. This distinction was bestowed on cities like Athens, which had a glorious past, or on those like St. Paul's Tarsus and Thessalonica itself, which had rendered loyal service during the civil wars. The privileges conferred by this honour were very important. The city was for all practical purposes withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the governor of the province in which it chanced to be situated; it had entire control of its own affairs; contributions to the state were not levied in the form of taxes, but were represented as a voluntary donation from the city of its own motion; in marked distinction from the colonies, no Roman soldiers were permanently garrisoned in a free city, nor were the insignia of office displayed. But in spite of these noticeable external differences, the loyalty of a free city, through pride and jealousy of its distinction, would be every whit as fervid as that of a colony. Conduct which could by any means be interpreted as implying disloyalty to the Emperor would meet with little tolerance.

Like Philippi, this city was called after a member of the Macedonian royal family. One of the generals of Alexander the Great married the half sister of this conqueror, and bestowed the name of his wife on the town. It was originally called Therme, and gave its name to the Thermaic Gulf. The situation of Thessalonica made it one of the most

important centres on the Ægean for the propagation of the Christian faith. By the Egnatian Way and other less important routes it commanded the interior of Macedonia, and sent the knowledge of Christ westwards into Illyricum, and on to the capital itself. It was on the direct route to Rome, landwards; while by sea, since Thessalonica was inferior only to Corinth and Ephesus in the volume of trade which passed through its port, the faith of Christ spread by numberless unnoticed channels to all the towns on the Ægean and Mediterranean. It is a striking illustration of the Apostle's method of seizing on a point where several lines of communication were knotted together, and sending out the Gospel in all directions from the busy centre. It was the strategic method of extending the kingdom of Christ.

The situation of Thessalonica was so central, "in the lap of the Empire," as Cicero has it, that when Constantine was casting about for the site of a new capital in the East, his choice almost lighted on Thessalonica instead of Byzantium. It is a remarkable illustration of the influence of situation on the fortunes of a town that neither of these cities, Thessalonica or Constantinople, has ever relapsed into obscurity, and at the present day when Thessalonica is familiar under the decapited form Salonica, its prosperity is as vigorous as ever.

The Apostle's experiences at Thessalonica were not particularly happy. The Jews in the city were sufficiently numerous to possess a synagogue, and

in spite of repeated rebuffs the Apostle adhered to his guiding principle, the Jew first. The points in his teaching on which he threw special emphasis are mentioned in the Acts, and they were not calculated to conciliate the feelings of a Jewish audience. He mainly directed his efforts to proving from the Old Testament writings that a suffering and not a triumphant Messiah (Christ is the Greek form of this word) should have been expected, and that Jesus Who had been executed by the order of a Roman procurator, was the Messiah. A few of the Jews, and a great number of the proselytes, became adherents of the new teaching; and many influential women—for the women of Macedonia enjoyed much more freedom than the women of Greece proper—also joined in the movement. But the main body of Jews in the city raised the mob against St. Paul, and showed themselves sufficiently expert in tactics to give their accusations a political colouring.

It is evident from the letters which the Apostle subsequently wrote to this church that one of the points on which he had touched most frequently when he was with them was the return of our Lord in His kingdom and glory. This was sufficient to give his opponents their opportunity. Jason, with whom the Apostle was staying, is dragged before the politarchs charged with treasonable practices in harbouring men who were engaged in disseminating sedition. The principal grievance was that, contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, the Apostle taught

that there was another Emperor besides Claudius, one Jesus. The magistrates were men of sufficient experience to be able to estimate such charges at their true value, but they were compelled to take action lest the loyal reputation of their city should suffer through misrepresentation, and Jason was ordered to give security that for the future he would abstain from sheltering men whose conduct gave ground for a charge of treason.

Nothing more could be done in Thessalonica, since this decision imposed silence on the Apostle. His life was in danger at the hands of his countrymen, and he was sent away by night to the less important town of Bercœa.

We are now coming to the point in the Apostle's career in which he began to communicate by letter with the churches he had founded. The earliest letters of St. Paul which have come down to us were written to Thessalonica, a few months later. The points of contact between the letters and the Acts are interesting. St. Paul mentions the fact that the shameful treatment he had experienced at Philippi did not deter him from preaching the Gospel at Thessalonica, where, however, there was much conflict (1 Thess. ii. 2). We also gather that the supporters of the Old Religion did not press into Christianity, and that the congregation at Thessalonica was mainly composed of Gentiles. The Apostle declares that they turned from idols to serve a living and true God (1 Thess. i. 9), a phrase which it would have been impossible to apply to

Jews ; and there is the further significant fact that the letters do not contain a single quotation from the Old Testament writings. Not less interesting are the glimpses which we are permitted to catch of the Apostle's method of working and teaching. He was intensely jealous of his pecuniary independence of the infant congregation, and laboured night and day to secure his livelihood by tent-making (1 Thess. ii. 6, 9); but when the time for teaching arrived, he dealt with his converts as a nurse or a father with children (1 Thess. ii. 7, 11). So affectionately desirous was he of them that he was willing to have imparted not the Gospel only, but also his own life (1 Thess. ii. 8) ; and when he was separated from the congregation, and letters took the place of personal intercourse, he was seized with an eager desire to look into their faces once more (ii. 17). An allusion in the letter to the Philippians, written during his imprisonment at Rome, shows that while he was in Thessalonica he had no hesitation about accepting gifts from the northern church (Phil. iv. 16).

Macedonia has too frequently been a name of ill-omen to the European nations, but there were no churches which St. Paul regarded with warmer feelings than those in Philippi and Thessalonica.

On the road to Berœa the Apostle would see ahead the snow-clad peaks of the well-wooded Olympus range, where the thought of the early Greeks located the abode of the deities. In this town the Jews had a synagogue, and they displayed a very

different spirit from their brethren in Thessalonica. Although the Apostle's teaching was quite unprecedented and overthrew very much which they had learned about their religion, they searched the Old Testament writings daily to see what amount of truth there might be in the novel doctrines. Thus they displayed an open mind, and a readiness to examine and overhaul established beliefs, which win the commendation of the sacred historian, were in striking contrast to the unreceptive spirit of the Thessalonian Jews, and are to be found all too infrequently even in the twentieth century.

The preaching of the Apostle met with considerable response among both Jews and Gentiles, but he was pursued by Jews from Thessalonica, and obliged to abandon the work. The Berœan Christians sent him to the coast to escape by ship to Athens, and so the first visit to Macedonia ended.

X

ACHAIA

As the Apostle's ship put out into the waters of the Thermaic Gulf the dominating feature of the retreating landscape was the "skyish head of blue Olympus," which may be regarded as the natural boundary between Macedonia and Greece proper, or Achaia, as it was called in the Roman provincial nomenclature. This was the mountain whose heights the poetic fancy of the early Greeks had peopled with gods; and the thoughts of moderns have been not seldom attracted by the fascination of this famous mythology. In so far as this tendency is the result of opposition to Christianity it is often the sign of a revolt against a presentation of our religion which is inadequate and unworthy. But when the Apostle was travelling in the shadow of woody Olympus it would be an error to suppose that his mission was a question of Christianity against the old gods. The popular religion had been riddled by the shafts of philosophic criticism and had long lost its hold on the people. The names of the deities survived in oaths, and the ritual of their worship was celebrated with splendour in shrines of great magnificence; but this did little more than meet the needs of the spectacular and artistic instincts of humanity. To satisfy the higher longings of the soul, and reply

to its obstinate questionings there was nothing but the various systems of philosophy.

Schiller has sung the gods of Greece; Heine lamented their downfall before the advent of a pale and meagre Christianity; Swinburne passionately championed the cause of paganism; and from a different standpoint Wordsworth has cried:

> "Great God! I'd rather be
> A pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
> So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
> Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
> Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
> Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn."

This is at once a challenge and an inspiration to Christians. The claim of Christianity is that it gives the best interpretation of the phenomena of life. It is easy to condemn manifestations like these longings for paganism; but it is better to profit by them. They represent a revolt against a deadening ecclesiasticism which is entirely different from a revolt against the life-bringing spirit of religion. They point all too clearly to the fact that the religion of the day was of the type of the Pharisees, and not instinct with the spirit of Christ. The representatives of Christianity were unable to rise to the height of their calling and present Christ to the world in His winning love. The main use of the past is to enable us to understand the present. He would be a visionless individual who would claim that the current presentation of Christianity is adequate to the needs of the twentieth century.

As the ship turned south it passed Ossa, the mount which the Titans were fabled to have heaped on Pelion in their mad attempt to scale Olympus and overthrow the gods. These are also the mountains of the wild contention by the grave of Ophelia. Between mount Ossa and Olympus lay the pleasant vale of Tempe, sung by many a poet. As they turned in between the long island of Eubœa and the mainland they sailed by the historic pass of Thermopylæ, where a gallant band of Greeks barred the way against the hordes of Persia; and further to the south there lay the celebrated battlefield of Marathon. When they rounded the promontory of Sunium, crowned by a temple to Minerva, and sailed into the Saronic Gulf, Salamis lay ahead, the scene of the famous sea fight against the Persians, a victory chanted by Æschylus.

The ship made its way, past Mount Hymettus, famed for thyme and honey, into the Piræus. In the days of its greatness the harbour was connected with Athens by the celebrated Long Walls, five miles in length. The population of Attica retreated within the shelter of these defences when the country was ravaged by the invader. When St. Paul visited the place they were partly in ruins, and nothing but traces of the foundations remains to-day.

As we imagine the Apostle in the busy harbour and picture him walking along the thronged highway between the Piræus and Athens, it is impossible not to think of the meeting between Socrates and some friends at the same port, which produced the debate

which gave birth to Plato's Republic. They, like St. Paul, were preparing to make their way back to Athens, having viewed the religious festivities, when the news of a torch race on horseback detained them at the Piræus for the evening, and so gave opportunity for the immortal discussion.

St. Paul had been prepared by his education, which was partially Greek, to be intensely interested in everything he saw at Athens. He was simply a unit in the vast crowd of citizens and visitors which thronged the Agora, went in and out of the splendid public buildings, or visited the statues and temples of the gods. Nothing which could occupy the mind or kindle the imagination was absent from this wonderful city. All the resources of sculpture and architecture had been employed to beautify Athens, and wherever the eye of the Apostle fell it met some object to be stored in the memory. High over all, on the Acropolis, was the Parthenon, the far-famed temple of the virgin goddess Minerva (Athene in Greek), and the hill was crowned by a colossal statue of Athene herself, looking out over the city she protected, a landmark visible from afar, her spear and shield glittering under the sun of Greece.

The description of the meeting between the Apostle and the philosophers in the Agora is one of the most interesting passages in the Acts. The spirit of Socrates had long fled from Athens; but as frequently happens, in religion no less than in philosophy, there were those who by sedulous imitation of his methods tried to persuade them-

selves that philosophy still dwelt in their city. The teachers whom St. Paul encountered were not of the school of Socrates and Plato ; they were Epicureans and Stoics. The founder of the former system was Epicurus of Samos, and from the place in which he lectured in Athens his followers were called the philosophers of the garden. The popular impression, summed up in the adjective *epicurean*, that this philosophy inculcated a careless pursuit of pleasure does considerably less than justice to the teaching it conveyed. The system really aimed at moderation, and the principles on which it was based were prudential. It held that the universal motive from which men acted was the avoidance of pain or the desire of pleasure ; but pleasure was ruined by overmuch indulgence no less than by abstinence. It will be seen that the philosophy was capable of a high development, but generally it resulted in such an urbane worldliness as is represented by Horace's outlook on life.

Stoicism was founded by Zeno, who was a native of Cyprus, the island which was so close to St. Paul's home country, and so prominent in the early history of Christianity. When Zeno began to teach at Athens he lectured in the well-known painted porch (*stoa*), and the philosophy derived its name from this circumstance. There is little need to insist on the lofty morality which was inculcated by this system, nor on the spiritual thought of the Deity which it fostered. This philosophy was very widely spread at this period, and had numerous adherents in

high position. St. Paul was familiar with it all his life.

It is interesting to notice how St. Paul, who, as he tells us, became all things to all men to secure their welfare (1 Cor. ix. 22), fell into the very spirit of Athens. The Jewish Rabbi disappears, and the Christian Apostle becomes the wandering dialectician. Socrates long ago had held converse on the real purpose of life in the Agora with everybody he met, and when he was put on trial he assured his judges that if he were acquitted he would not alter his conduct. Similarly St. Paul, having paid his customary visit to the synagogue reasoned with every chance comer in the Agora. It was then that he encountered the philosophers and found himself surrounded by a group of eager listeners, who liked nothing better than to be present at a display of impromptu dialectics. Some of the philosophers are frankly contemptuous, and take no trouble to conceal their conviction that the Apostle was nothing but an Eastern charlatan. The epithet they applied to him has been translated "babbler," and with this signification it would be derived from the ceaseless chatter of birds. It is properly used of birds picking up seeds, and would then express the contempt of the student for the amateur who had picked up some crumbs of learning with which he endeavours to make a parade of erudition. The curiosity of others was excited by the novelty of the Apostle's teaching. Many cults of foreign deities found their way to Athens, and Jesus and the Resurrection which were introduced

by this new teacher were among the latest. It would while away an hour or two to hear more of the matter.

Accordingly, they take him to the Areopagus, or Mars' Hill (Ares is the Greek word for Mars, the god of war). The Agora was bounded on the east by the Acropolis, and on the north by this famous hill. According to the ancient legend which gave the place its name, Mars had been tried here for the murder of Neptune's son. It was the meeting-place of the court which was charged with the oversight of the moral welfare of the Athenians. But it was not a session of the court in which the Apostle delivered his message. He was simply invited to expound his views for the satisfaction of a gathering of philosophers.

The note of St. Luke about the curiosity of the Athenians hits off to a nicety one of their most marked characteristics. The spirit of levity which rendered them impatient of what was not novel was the despair of Demosthenes when he tried to rouse them to a sense of the danger of Philip's activity in the north. They are more interested in the latest news, he says, than in making the preparations which would render the man of Macedonia powerless.

The Apostle's address to the philosophic assembly on the hill, a far different assembly and in far different surroundings from that which our Lord once addressed on the Mount, was entirely cast in philosophic mould. It is a striking proof of the variety

of the methods of which the Apostle was master. We have, of course, as usual, only a very brief summary of all that was actually said, but in this summary, until we come to the last words, there is hardly anything which might not have been spoken by a Stoic philosopher. It will help to a realization of the variety of the Apostle's styles if this speech be compared with his first recorded address in the synagogue of the Pisidian Antioch. There he was speaking to Jews as a Rabbi, although a Rabbi who no longer believed in the familiar religion; here to Greeks as a philosopher, and it would not be possible for two speeches to differ more widely. The topics of his address here are the familiar topics of Stoicism, and the Apostle quotes to illustrate his argument a saying from a Greek poet Aratus, who like himself was a native of Tarsus. But in the end, although he elected to go round by way of Stoicism, the Apostle arrived at Christ, and this was the point at which he parted company with his auditors. As long as he was content to discuss matters which were the proper subjects of abstract speculation they were perfectly content to listen. But when he left the realms of the abstract and touched on such concrete themes as judgment and the Saviour, the interest of his philosophic hearers rapidly waned. Some of them scoffed, but others politely professed their desire to hear him again. A woman named Damaris, who is otherwise unknown, and a member of the court of Areopagus called Dionysius, with whose identity ecclesiastical tradition has been busy, making him

Bishop of Athens, were the only adherents whom the Apostle gained by his speech on Mars' Hill.

From Athens St. Paul went on to Corinth, which was the business centre of Achaia and the capital of the province. Corinth was situated on the narrow passage of land which connected the northern portion of Greece with the Morea. Away to the north across the Corinthian Gulf could be seen the twin peaks of Parnassus, sacred to Apollo and poetry. The connecting piece of land was called the Isthmus, and so great was its fame that its name has since been bestowed upon every similarly situated neck of land. The town itself gave its name to the fruit which is so popular under the name of currants. Corinth of the two seas, as the city was styled by poets, was magnificently situated for purposes of trade. A high rock called the Acrocorinthus raised its unwieldy mass abruptly from the level of the Isthmus, and the people who were masters of this natural fortress could control all traffic by land between the Morea and the north. Consequently, all travellers, whether for business or pleasure, between the northern and southern parts of Greece had to pass by the gates of Corinth. In addition to this, its two harbours, Lechæum on the west and Cenchræa on the east, were full of ships which came from every country which was known at that day, crowded with travellers eager to drink deeply of the pleasures of this famous city of delight. Corinth was the Paris of the Empire, and deserved its reputation far more richly than the city of light. A mercantile town, its chief business

was to attract wealthy foreigners whose purse-strings would not be kept too tightly drawn. Since nothing is so expensive as the pursuit of pleasure, prices had rapidly risen, and the expense of a visit to Corinth had passed into a proverb. The shameless licentiousness of the place was notorious even under the Empire. It is unnecessary to insist on a fact which could be abundantly illustrated, but it may be pointed out, as well to indicate the moral atmosphere of Corinth as to explain some very frequently misunderstood sayings of St. Paul on the position of women in the church, that there were no less than 1,000 courtezans serving as priestesses in the temple of Venus (Aphrodite). When the significance of this fact is realized the force of the words at the beginning of his first letter, "the church of God which is in Corinth," will be grasped for the first time.

After the death of Alexander, when the hold of Macedonia on the south was slackening, the cities of Greece formed themselves into the Achæan league. Corinth was the most prominent member of this federation; and at the time when Rome was beginning to succeed to Macedonia as the supreme arbiter of the destinies of Greece, she was so unfortunate as to insult the Roman ambassadors, who were charged with a delicate mission. A terrible example was made of Corinth. Mummius with his legions marched on the town, which was quickly stormed. The citizens were butchered or sold as slaves, the city burned, the whole place, like Jerusalem in the captivity, lay desolate, and for a

century Corinth was blotted out of existence, and remembered merely as a fearful example of Roman vengeance.

In 46 B.C., exactly a hundred years after its destruction, Corinth was rebuilt by Julius Cæsar, and a Roman colony established on the site of the old city. In its constitution, therefore, it resembled Philippi and the Pisidian Antioch, two other colonies in which the Apostle preached. Owing to its position it rapidly regained its importance.

The busy city from which lines of communication radiated in every direction was considered a suitable centre for evangelistic work, and the Apostle established his headquarters at Corinth for eighteen months. Antioch, it will be noticed, has now fallen into the background as a centre of work among the Gentiles, at any rate so far as St. Paul is concerned; it lay too far to the east. Now he only pays flying visits to the Syrian city, and, ever tending westwards, chooses out the busiest cities in the Empire as new centres from which the work might grow.

It was at Corinth that the Apostle first met Aquila and his wife Priscilla, who rapidly became prominent in the affairs of the early congregations. Aquila was a Jew by birth, originally of Pontus, a province on the southern shore of the Black Sea—one of those to which 1 Peter was written—but resident of recent years in Rome. The Jews had lately been expelled from the capital by an edict of Claudius. This affair is also mentioned by Suetonius, the

Roman historian, who adds that their expulsion was due to tumults excited among them by one Christus or Chrestus. Aquila was of the same craft as St. Paul, and the two worked together in Corinth at the trade of tent-making. The Jew from Rome was greatly attracted by the new doctrines which St. Paul preached, while the Apostle on his side was eager to glean all the information which was available about affairs in the capital. A lifelong friendship was the result of this meeting in Corinth.

It was in Corinth also that Silas and Timothy, who had been sent back to Macedonia, arrived with cheering news, which greatly affected the Apostle's spirits. It is sometimes thought that this is the second northward journey which they had taken at the Apostle's instigation. Light is thrown on the incident by the Apostle himself, for we find an allusion to it in the earliest letter which we possess from his pen, 1 Thessalonians, which, like the other letter to the northern city, was written to the Macedonian Christians during this residence at Corinth.

It appears from 1 Thessalonians that the Apostle had many times endeavoured to return to Thessalonica, but had been prevented by "Satan," that is by the hostility of the Jews, or, less probably, by the intervention of the government officials (ii. 18). But it was impossible for him to rest while he was uncertain about affairs in Macedonia, and therefore, while he was still in Athens, he had dispatched Timothy northwards, to learn how they were faring. He remained at Athens alone and subsequently

went on to Corinth, where he awaited the return of Timothy, who was now joined by Silas. The story which Timothy had to tell of the fortunes of the Macedonian Christians was favourable in the extreme, and the Apostle overflows with expressions of thankfulness for the steadfastness of his converts (iii. 6). The good news from the north cheered him greatly in his conflict with the Jews of Corinth, and there is a very characteristic passage in the letter which shows how this incessant controversy with the adherents of the old religion weighed on his spirits (ii. 13—16).

With the return of the messengers from Macedonia came a development of the work in Corinth. Encouraged by the presence of his assistants, the Apostle gave himself vigorously to the proof of his favourite thesis, that Jesus Who had been crucified in Palestine was the Messiah whose coming the Jews expected (see 1 Cor. i. 23, where "Christ crucified" should read "a crucified Messiah"). But his efforts only met with blasphemy, and, realizing that the time for a definite separation had arrived, he warned the excited crowd that the responsibility for the decision must rest with them, and that for the future he intended to preach to people who were not Jews.

The house of Titus Justus, a proselyte with a Latin name—a fact, however, which does not give us any indication of his nationality—became the headquarters of the work among the Gentiles. The fact that it was next door to the synagogue from

which the Apostle had just seceded did not tend to soothe the feelings of the Jews. But when Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue—another man with a Latin name, this time a Jew—became a Christian, the bitterness of their feelings was accentuated to such a degree that nothing but the opportunity was needed to lead to violence. Crispus was a man of great influence in the Jewish community, and his determination to embrace the tenets of the new religion and become a follower of the crucified Messiah was a turning point in the history of Christianity in Corinth. St. Paul showed his sense of the importance of the accession of Crispus by the fact that he baptized him with his own hands, a proceeding which was entirely contrary to his usual custom (1 Cor. i. 14). The fierceness of the Jewish resentment at the loss of their leader may be gauged by the character of the vision which was vouchsafed to the Apostle. He was assured that, in spite of the unpromising appearances, God had much people in that city, and that no man would set on him to hurt him.

The opportunity for which the Jews were waiting presented itself when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia. When Greece became a Roman province this name was affixed to it in memory of the Achæan league, in which Corinth had been a member. The prevalence of Latin names in his chapter, and in the last chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, which was written from Corinth, will be understood when it is remembered that the city was a Roman colony.

This fact also accounts for the astuteness with which the Apostle's teaching was represented as an attempt to introduce deities forbidden by the Roman law, which alone was recognized in a colony (xviii. 13).

But Gallio had very decided views about the class of questions which should engage the attention of a proconsul. He saw in a moment that there was no infringement of the Roman law, for he looked on St. Paul as a Jew, and the religion of the Jews was regarded as legal by the Romans. Far be it from him, then, to condescend to interfere in a quarrel between Jews. He dismissed the accusers without troubling to conceal his contempt. They were the leading members of the Jewish community, and, in a city like Corinth, were possessed of great wealth. The Greek and Roman sections of the populace were always ready to break out against the Jews, and the indifferent demeanour of the proconsul gave the bystanders the cue they desired. With hearty goodwill they fell upon Sosthenes, who had succeeded Crispus as ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment seat. This outburst of popular spite did not disturb the careless indifference of the philosophic proconsul, who probably phrased it to himself that the rascally Jews were getting their deserts, and as the record says, "Gallio cared for none of these things."

This powerful official, with such anti-Semitic feelings, was the brother of the famous philosopher Seneca. He changed his name when he was adopted into the family of Gallio, a friend of his father

and a celebrated rhetorician. Seneca mentions his brother in his letters, and refers to the irresistible charm of his manner. In connection with the question whether St. Paul met Seneca at Rome, it is interesting to remember that he had met his brother at Corinth. The incident will help us to realize that throughout his life the Apostle was never out of touch with the Stoic philosophy.

At the end of two years St. Paul sailed away from Cenchræa, the eastern port of Corinth, in a ship bound for Syria. It is remarkable that before leaving Achaia he took on himself a vow which was quite in the spirit of the old religion, but the reference to the incident is entirely too indefinite to permit any conclusions to be drawn as to its nature.

No journey on the Ægean was more frequently made than the passage between Corinth and Ephesus, the capitals of the provinces of Achaia and Asia, which faced each other at the distance of a few days' sail if the wind was favourable. On the way across the Apostle's ship threaded her way through the isles of Greece, famed in history and song.

> " The sprinkled isles,
> Lily on lily, that o'erlace the sea,
> And laugh their pride when the light wave lisps
> ' Greece.' "

When he arrived at Ephesus, in spite of the repeated rebuffs he had experienced, the Apostle again spoke in the synagogue. His rule was, " The Jew first." But he did not wish to stay in Asia. He took ship again and the next port mentioned is

Cæsarea, on the coast of Palestine. On landing, he went up and saluted the church, by which must be meant the congregation at Jerusalem. He then travelled northwards to Antioch, the scene of his earlier labours, to which, although he was not conscious of the fact, he was now paying a farewell visit. Having spent some time in Syria, he started on another tour.

The result of the second circuit was that Galatia was revisited, Macedonia and Achaia evangelized, and the two earliest of St. Paul's letters, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, composed.

XI

EPHESUS

The arrival of Apollos at Ephesus brings a new element into the history, distinct from any we have hitherto encountered. He was a man of Alexandria. Our sources do not tell us of a journey of St. Paul to the south; if he had ever visited Alexandria—and he had every inducement to do so, since it was a great centre of Judaism—it must have been in early days, if he were employed on business of the Sanhedrin. But of this it is impossible to speak with certainty; the information which we possess represents him as continually journeying to the north and the west. Apollos however, was a man who had been brought up in Alexandrian influences, and the impression which he subsequently made on the Christians of Corinth renders it necessary for us to form some idea of the shape which Judaism had assumed in the Egyptian city.

In every large city of the Græco-Roman world it was inevitable that teachers of Judaism should be influenced by the prevalence of views derived from Greek philosophy. The method of representing Judaism was therefore insensibly modified; but in no case was the amalgamation of the two systems more completely carried out than in Alexandria. Philo

stands at the culminating point of this development, and in his writings the law of Moses is completely reconciled with the philosophy of Plato. The well-known saying ran, " Either Plato philonizes or Philo platonizes."

Now, it is evident that the writings of the Old Testament, which are the literature of an Eastern religion, must have been treated in a special manner to make them yield results which were in such complete harmony with Western philosophy. This method was the celebrated system of allegorical exegesis, which was brought to perfection in Alexandria. Philo taught—and the views of the Jewish sage were propagated by the celebrated line of Christian teachers of that city in subsequent centuries—that there was a hidden meaning in the scriptures, one which lay behind, and was infinitely more valuable than, the literal sense which could be elucidated by means of grammar and history.

The result of this system was that the real meaning of the scripture could always be thrust aside, and that there was no limit to the number of the allegorical interpretations which might be advanced, except one were imposed by a failure of ingenuity on the part of the expounder. The method of allegoric interpretation was well understood by the Rabbis, and an interesting example of its use may be seen in Galatians where St. Paul sees the history of Judaism and Christianity typified in the story of Isaac and Ishmael (Gal. iv. 21—v. 1).

The use of the allegoric method was well estab-

lished in pagan culture. Plato, whose philosophical prejudices were offended by the anthropomorphic presentation of the gods in the old mythology, determined that the poems of Homer, which are full of these stories, should be banished from his ideal republic. But the Stoics were not prepared for such an overwhelming sacrifice; and in order to reconcile the rudeness of early ideas with the refinements of a philosophic age, they invoked the assistance of an elaborate system of allegorical interpretation. In this way the stories of the poet by which men are enthralled to-day were held to conceal wonderful discoveries of philosophic truth, and to be the vehicle for its communication when properly interpreted, or in other words, when the literal meaning had been set aside. Accordingly, a man might revel in the legends of the old mythology without in any degree derogating from his philosophic dignity. We should have an exact parallel to-day, if, instead of studying the Homeric poems to determine the nature of the civilization in which they were produced, men should insist that they were the sources of the only true doctrines on the future of Socialism or the exact bearing of the Kantian philosophy.

Cultivated Jews who were influenced by the literary and philosophic movements of the day were enabled by this system to show that the results won by Western civilization had been anticipated by Moses. The conclusions of Greek philosophy were educed from the Pentateuch. When the Old

Testament was explained on this system to refer to contemporary happenings, it became a new book ; and Apollos, who was a master of the allegoric method, arrived in Corinth and swept the congregation off its feet by his brilliant eloquence and fascinating explanations of the sacred writings. St. Paul's teaching seemed poor in comparison.

But this belongs to a slightly later period of the history. Apollos first appears in Ephesus, where he met Aquila and Priscilla, who had been left by St. Paul in that city when he sailed for Palestine. The speeches of the Alexandrian attracted their attention in the synagogue.

After a short stay at Ephesus, Apollos conceived the plan of crossing the Ægean, and working in Corinth. A man who was so thoroughly in sympathy with Hellenism would soon long for other surroundings than were afforded by Ephesus, where there was a strong Oriental element. In Corinth he would be in the centre of Greece itself, and in conditions which would be entirely congenial. So he set out for Achaia, bearing a letter of introduction from the Christians at Ephesus. We shall notice later the unhappy consequences which sprang from his visit.

The greater part of St. Paul's third journey was occupied with evangelistic work, which had for its centre Ephesus, the capital of Asia. At the beginning of the second missionary journey he had been forbidden to speak the word in Asia (xvi. 6) ; at the end of that journey he had paid a passing call

at Ephesus; but on the third journey Asia, the wealthiest province of the Empire, was to be thoroughly evangelized.

Ephesus was one of the original settlements of the Ionic Greeks. A thousand years before Christ, some tribes of Hellenes, driven from their homes in Greece, crossed the Ægean and planted themselves along the western coast of Asia Minor. At first they had a hard struggle to maintain their position against the masses of the Oriental population, but in the course of centuries, they not merely established themselves in security, but gave birth to one of the most celebrated civilizations the world has known. They attained a position of comparative ease and prosperity at an earlier period than their brethren who had been left on the other side of the Ægean; consequently, the arts were born somewhat sooner among the Ionians than among the other branches of the Hellenic race. Their genius was greatly influenced by the marvellous beauty of the coast on which they had settled, and by their contact with the luxury of the Orientals. They were now and then accused of a strain of effeminacy by the sturdy clansmen on the west of the Ægean. But in what are sometimes considered the more practical arts of life they gave a good account of themselves, and in particular they had great gifts for colonization. Massilia was one of their colonies, widely known to-day as Marseilles. There is not one of the arts in which they were not famous, and some of the most priceless heritages

of humanity are due to the Greeks of Ionia. In architecture, the Ionic style is familiar, while there was a celebrated school of Ionic philosophy. Herodotus, the father of history, wrote in the Ionic dialect, and as for poets, Homer is the "Ionic father of them all."

The Ionic league, which consisted of twelve cities including Ephesus, was unable to maintain its independence, and the cities became subject first of all to the Lydian kings whose capital was Sardis (Rev. iii. 1), and at a later period to the Persians, when Cyrus had overthrown Crœsus and the kingdom of Lydia. In the wars which the Persians waged against the Greeks, the Ionic cities were compelled by their Oriental rulers to furnish contingents to fight against the men of their own race. But they equalized matters by deserting to the side of the Greeks at Mycale. When Alexander shattered the power of Persia, the cities were delivered from Oriental government and became part of the Macedonian Empire; but when we meet Ephesus, Smyrna and Miletus in the Acts and the Revelation, which latter Book is entirely concerned with affairs in Asia, the Macedonian Empire had passed away, and the Ionic cities were subject to Rome, and formed part of the province of Asia.

The modern use of the word Asia to designate the largest division of the earth's surface, or in the form Asia Minor as the title of the great Anatolian peninsula, must be dismissed from the mind in reading the New Testament. Neither of

these uses had come into existence, and when the word occurs in the Bible, it invariably refers to the Roman province of that name, which included the districts on the east coast of the Ægean.

Ephesus, then, was a city of the greatest antiquity, and of warring ideals. Ionic art was the result of the contact of the Greek genius with Oriental influences, and in the cities of Ionia this struggle between Eastern and Western influences never ceased. A memorable example of the sort of compromise in which such a struggle was bound to issue is furnished by Ephesus itself, where a temple which was acclaimed a masterpiece of the Ionic order served as a shrine for a goddess who was unmistakably Oriental. It is true that she bore the name of the Greek goddess Artemis (in the English Version the Latin form Diana is used), but a glance at a representation of this many-breasted deity will be sufficient to show that she was altogether Eastern. The indigenous religions were entirely too firmly rooted to be dispossessed by the beliefs of the intruding Greeks; all that could be done was to adapt and re-baptize them. It was somewhat similar to a process which frequently occurred when Christianity took the place of paganism.

At Ephesus the Apostle did not deviate from his customary rule of preaching in the synagogue first. But the hostility of the Jews was no less constant than the Apostle's advances to them, and in Ephesus, as in so many other cities, he was driven to recognize that he could not hope to succeed as

long as he remained in connection with the synagogue. Accordingly, he withdrew, and for the next two years expounded the doctrines of Christianity in the lecture hall of one Tyrannus, a heathen teacher of philosophy, which he hired for the purpose. At one time of the day and to one audience there were explained the tenets of Seneca, Epicurus, or Plato; at another time and to quite a different assembly was proclaimed the faith of Jesus Christ. Here we have a symbol which cannot be forgotten of the results of the Apostle's life. In our Lord's words, the kingdom was taken from the Jews and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits of it (Matt. xxi. 43). Christianity driven from the synagogue finds itself at home in the pagan auditorium.

The Apostle's preaching at Ephesus met with the greatest success. The inhabitants of Asia were perhaps the most superstitious people in the world, and in the Book of Revelation, which was written in Ephesus, there are several allusions to their belief in the potent efficacy of spells and charms. The reference in verse nineteen to the practitioners of the magical arts is in the completest agreement with what we know of Ephesus from other sources. The name Ephesian was specifically applied to certain formulæ which, when engraved on amulets, were supposed to produce beneficent results. But when the influence of Christ's religion became so pervasive, those who had renounced paganism brought their books which dealt with the black

art, and burned them in a way which recalls the similar burnings patronized by the *piagnoni* in Florence. In fact, Christianity was spreading with such rapidity in Asia that the heathen religions found themselves compelled to reckon with their new rival. It was like what happened in Bithynia at the beginning of the second century. When Pliny entered on his office in that province, he found that the temples of the gods were deserted owing to the growth of Christianity. Matters had not advanced so far in Ephesus, but the success of the Apostle was so great that a riot was provoked among those who were dependent on the pagan systems for the continuance of their livelihood.

The original temple of Artemis at Ephesus was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. It was burnt down on the night that Alexander the Great was born by one of those criminals of instable sanity whose inordinate vanity drives them to perpetrate deeds of such enormity that their name may continue in the remembrance of men. The maniac in this instance succeeded to the utmost of his desire, and the name of Herostratus will always be associated with the destruction of the famous temple. But Ephesus soon recovered from the terrible disaster, and the whole district of Asia rallied to her assistance. Subscriptions poured in from all quarters, the women contributing their jewels, and a new building was speedily erected to the tutelary deity of the city. This is the building which was seen by St. Paul, and described by Pliny.

Ephesus

It was the largest temple in the world, as well as being one of the most magnificent, and was enthusiastically pronounced by a heathen writer to be the only abode of the gods. Within the precincts of this shrine no arms might be borne, and in strong contrast with the temple at Jerusalem, no bloody sacrifices offered. Privileges of sanctuary also attached to this building, and Tacitus gives an interesting account of the proceedings of the Senate to which Tiberius committed an investigation into the abuse of the rights of sanctuary in the East about thirty years before St. Paul came to Ephesus. The case of Ephesus was the first considered by the Senate, and as might have been expected, one of the strongest arguments advanced was that the city had been the birthplace of Diana. In addition to this, the building was the treasure-house of the city, and since it was used by private citizens as their bank, it will be understood that the temple of Artemis was associated in the most intimate fashion with the life of Ephesus.

It was in connection with the worship of Artemis in this building that the uprising against the Christian preaching took place. There was no deity which was privately worshipped so extensively as the Ephesian Artemis. Throngs of visitors were continually journeying to the city to behold the famous temple. It was owing to this fact that a lucrative trade had sprung up in miniature replicas of the shrine in silver and other metals; whether they were intended to be used as votive offer-

ings or preserved as memorials of the visit is uncertain.

Demetrius was a leading silversmith in Ephesus, a man who gave employment to numbers of artizans, and was of great influence in the trade guild, or union, as we call it to-day. This man was the ringleader of the riot. He became aware that the demand for silver shrines was diminishing, and sagaciously connected the slackening of interest in Artemis with the preaching of a spiritual religion by St. Paul. He promptly summoned a meeting of the guild which watched over the interests of the trade, and harangued the assembled members in fiery language. He pointed out that their interests were identical, since their common prosperity depended on the popularity of this trade. The great falling away in the demand for silver shrines was due to the preaching of St. Paul, the influence of which was felt not only in the capital, but throughout the province. The religion of their fathers was good enough for them. They had the temple, processions and priests; what more could possibly be required? Who was this wandering Jew that he should venture to question the beliefs which had been handed down from bygone generations? If these rash innovators should succeed in fixing in the public mind the truth which philosophers taught, that their idols were not really deities, then their trade would be destroyed; and more than this, the glory of their city, the shrine of the great goddess Artemis, would come to be

despised, and the Queen of Ephesus, who was worshipped by Asia and the world, would be deposed from her magnificence.

Demetrius thoroughly understood the demagogue's art of playing on the patriotic feelings of the populace. The cry that the temple was in danger drove his hearers into the greatest fury, and they shouted for their goddess in the familiar words of the English Version, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." The demonstrators, an excited mob, poured out of the hall in which the meeting had been held, and quickly roused the city. Two Macedonians, companions of St. Paul, were seized by the crowd and hurried into the theatre. Here, again, modern ideas associated with a word must be dismissed from the mind. But everybody is now familiar with the appearance of an ancient theatre, open to the winds of heaven.

At this point St. Paul comes into the story. He heard the disturbance and wished to speak in the theatre, which was crowded with rioters. He would without doubt have carried out his resolve had he not been prevented by the Asiarchs. We are told that these chiefs of Asia were his friends, and this fact is of the greatest interest because of the light which it throws on the relations between Christian teachers and Imperial officials at this date. Almost without exception in the Acts, the government officials behave with friendliness to the Apostle, and here they manifest the liveliest solicitude for his personal safety. The men who bore the title

of Asiarch were extremely wealthy. Nobody but an individual of extraordinary wealth could support the office, since it entailed the responsibility of defraying the expense of the games and processions in connection with religious festivities. But their real importance consisted in their association with the Imperial religion, in which the Emperor was worshipped as the head of the state. When the Revelation was written in Ephesus later in the century, the Imperial religion was the deadliest enemy of Christianity. When Polycarp was martyred in Smyrna, not far from Ephesus (Rev. ii. 8—11), an Asiarch presided at his trial. But when St. Paul was in Ephesus, the friendliness of these officials was in the greatest contrast to their hostility at a later date. Writers who argue for a late date for the composition of the Acts urge that this great change in the attitude of the Empire to Christianity had already taken place, and that the author had an apologetic purpose in his book, wishing to show the persecuting officials of his time that their predecessors of an earlier day had been on familiar and even friendly terms with an Apostle of the faith.

In the theatre there was a scene of the wildest confusion. The huge crowd which had been attracted by the excited artizans in their progress through the streets understood nothing whatever about the object of the demonstration. The appearance of Alexander in the orchestra was the signal for a fresh outburst. He was a Jew, and had been put forward by the synagogue party in order

to make it clear to the citizens that the Jews were in no way associated with the teaching of St. Paul. But when the mob saw a Jew before them, they gave free course to their anti-Semitic instincts, and for about three hours they bellowed out their rallying cry, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." This part of the narrative has sometimes been received with incredulity, but similar scenes are not entirely unknown in the twentieth century.

The passions of the multitude were at last appeased by the appearance of the town clerk, who was a much more important individual than the official who bears that title in municipal life to-day. His speech, of which a brief summary is given, must have been a model combination of persuasive reasoning and popular address. He plays on the theme of local patriotism no less skilfully than Demetrius, but with a different object. This excitement in defence of Artemis, he argues, is undignified because unnecessary. The loyalty of Asia to her guardian deity cannot possibly be impugned. All the world knows that she is the temple-keeper of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter. The word *neokoros*, translated "temple-keeper," meant at first "temple-sweeper," and is a striking example of an expression which had originally a menial signification, and came in time to be a title of honour. It occurs repeatedly on the coins of ancient cities. The image which fell down from Jupiter was a meteoric stone such as may be seen in any museum

to-day. In antiquity, aerolites were regarded as celestial visitants, and were treated with great veneration, as in the present case, if some vague approximation to a human shape could be distinguished in the mass of metal.

Since these facts are indisputable, the town clerk argues that they must not be betrayed by excitement into a weak course of action. Besides, there is no charge they can bring against the men they have seized; they are neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of Artemis. In fact, the proceedings of the guild are entirely irregular. If Demetrius and his fellows consider that they have a grievance, the constitutional remedy of the law is available. He hints that disturbances of this nature are calculated to draw on the city unwelcome attention from the Roman governor. If an enquiry should be ordered into this riot, those who were responsible for the well-being of the city would be hard put to it to find a satisfactory explanation. When he had calmed their excitement by a steady flow of common-sense, he dismissed the assembly.

So ended the episode of Demetrius. It is related at great length by St. Luke, who makes no allusion to another event which occurred at Ephesus, and is of much greater interest to us. This is the writing of the first letter to the Corinthians.

This letter was written before the riot of the silversmiths' guild, and was in reply to one which the Apostle had received from Corinth. We have

seen that intercourse between the cities was frequent and, if the wind were favourable, rapid. The Corinthians in their letter asked the Apostle for guidance in certain difficulties which they had encountered. Among other things, they wished to know whether a believer might eat meat which had been offered in a heathen temple; what was the proper method of observing the sacramental supper; what was the true teaching on the subject of the resurrection; whether marriage was forbidden to the believer; and when Apollos would visit them again.

St. Paul deals very fully with all these questions in the letter he wrote from Ephesus; but he did not begin his reply till chapter seven. The opening chapters of the letter deal with matters which the Corinthians had carefully suppressed, and of which they supposed the Apostle ignorant. In the rather complacent letter which they had sent by the hands of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus (1 Cor. xvi. 17), they had only touched on the side of their Christian life which did them credit. But there were other Corinthian visitors in Ephesus besides the bearers of the Corinthian letter, and, in particular, the Apostle had met some of the dependents of Chloe, a wealthy Corinthian lady, from whom he had gleaned information on matters about which the Corinthians had been silent (1 Cor. i. 11). The Apostle was thoroughly distressed and annoyed when he heard of the disorders at Corinth, and he deals with their party spirit and the case of incest

in the forefront of his letter, no doubt greatly to the astonishment of the recipients ; and it is not till chapter seven that he turns to the questions their letter contained with a " Now concerning the things ye have written unto me."

A note in the Acts shows that before the uprising of Demetrius, the Apostle had determined to go from Ephesus to Macedonia and Achaia, calling at Corinth in the latter province ; and then, having sailed to Jerusalem, to devote his next journey to the capital of the Empire (xix. 21). In preparation for the journey he sent Timothy and Erastus into Macedonia. The details in 1 Corinthians are in harmony with these facts. The Apostle is in Ephesus, where he intends to stay till Pentecost (xvi. 8). There is an open door and many adversaries. He sends greetings from the churches of Asia (xvi. 19). He announces his intention of visiting Corinth when he has passed through Macedonia, and promises to spend some time with them (xvi. 6).

Apollos (Apollonius), the brilliant Alexandrian teacher who came to Corinth after the departure of St. Paul, had made such a profound impression on the Corinthians by his preaching that there were not wanting those who contrasted him with the Apostle, very much to the disadvantage of St. Paul. Parties had been formed which divided the community at Corinth into hostile camps, each professing the name of a different leader (i. 12). In circumstances like these it is not surprising to learn that Apollos was tactful enough to refrain just then

from accepting the invitation to revisit Corinth (xvi. 12).

In addition to the writing of 1 Corinthians, the Apostle's stay at Ephesus witnessed the evangelization of Asia. There were several towns in the province in which the faith was planted at this time, some of them which the Apostle had never visited. One of these was Colossæ, to which he wrote from Rome, reminding them that they had never seen his face (Col. ii. 1). Laodicea was another (Col. iv. 15; Rev. iii. 14). The charming little letter which St. Paul sent from Rome with a runaway slave was written to a Colossian, Philemon.

XII

MACEDONIA, ACHAIA, AND THE ISLES OF GREECE

St. Luke has crowded the nine months which elapsed after the Apostle's departure from Ephesus into the first three verses of chapter twenty. Our disappointment at his summary treatment of this period is all the more intense because during these months, of which no record is preserved in the Acts, St. Paul wrote three of his most important letters. An explanation of the blank which will readily suggest itself is that a time of mental and literary activity in the life of man is rarely marked by important external events. Kant at Königsberg is the classical example. But the absence of material for the history is insufficient to account for the silence of the Acts, because the period included the all-important visit to Corinth. Our knowledge of the events of this journey through Macedonia and Achaia must be collected from such hints as are furnished by the letters themselves. It will, of course, be borne in mind that the letters are the primary authority for any event in the history with which they chance to deal.

Owing to the turbulence of the Ephesian populace, the Apostle's work in that city was brought to an

abrupt conclusion, and he determined to visit the churches he had founded on his previous journey in the provinces of Macedonia and Achaia. He probably left Ephesus by ship and sailed to Troas, where, on his former visit, the man of Macedonia had appeared to him. It seems to have been his intention to remain for some considerable time in that busy port; but he was seized with a spirit of restlessness as a result of the non-appearance of Titus to tell him how the congregation at Corinth had received his letter. He tells us that there was a promising field at Troas, but he became so feverish from anxiety that he was compelled to give up the work he had begun, and once again cross to Macedonia in order to meet the messenger. "Now when I came to Troas for the gospel of Christ, and when a door was opened for me in the Lord, I had no relief for my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking leave of them I went into Macedonia" (2 Cor. ii. 12, 13).

The next time the Apostle's movements are noticed we find him in Macedonia, probably at Philippi, with the tumult in his mind raging more fiercely than ever. The battle with the Judaizers abated no whit of its intensity, and between the bitterness of his opponents and the upheaval in his own soul, the Apostle is reduced to the condition which he describes in the well-known words, "without were fightings, within were fears." "For even when we were come into Macedonia our flesh had no relief, but we were afflicted on every

side; without were fightings, within were fears" (2 Cor. vii. 5). The English reader will wish to bear in mind that the plural refers to the Apostle alone, and that the text must be read as though "I" stood in the place of "we."

But in the moment of his deepest despondency Titus arrived from the south with the news that the Corinthians had received the letter in a becoming spirit, and had set to work vigorously to rid their community of the elements which had so thoroughly excited the Apostle's indignation. The sudden revulsion of feeling which the Apostle experienced on the coming of Titus is described in chapter seven of 2 Corinthians. But although the majority of the congregation had strikingly evinced their loyalty to St. Paul, there remained an irreconcilable minority which continued to level the most odious charges against him. The Apostle immediately wrote his second letter, which he sent to Corinth by Titus (viii. 16). It was probably written from Philippi, and the tradition embodied in the notes affixed to the Epistles, which have been omitted in the Revised Version, would in this instance be correct.

The Apostle continued to linger in Macedonia, for he was unwilling to appear in Corinth until the situation was more clearly defined. It may be that, when he had visited the congregations he had already founded, he journeyed westward along the Egnatian Way, till he arrived at Dyrrachium, the port for Brundusium. In the Epistle to the Romans which he wrote shortly afterwards he says that he had

preached the Gospel as far as Illyricum (Rom. xv. 19). If this phrase is to be taken literally it will mean, as has just been suggested, that he journeyed across the mainland to the shores of the Adriatic. But the employment of the word "Illyricum" is very ill-defined, and the phrase could quite properly be applied by the Apostle to work which never took him outside the bounds of Macedonia proper.

The second letter to the Corinthians enables us to see how fully the Apostle's mind was occupied with the collection which he was organizing in the four provinces, Asia, Galatia, Macedonia, and Achaia, for the benefit of the poor at Jerusalem. The presence of Ephesian delegates shows that Asia was included, although St. Paul has not occasion to mention this fact in his letters (Acts xx. 4). The collection was intended to be a crushing reply to the assertion of his opponents that he had lost the sentiment of nationality; and it was probably the desire to make it a success which, as much as anything, drew the Apostle down to Corinth.

When St. Paul did arrive at Corinth he came with a rod. He remained there three months (Acts xx. 3), and dealt severely with those who had contemned his authority. But he had not been long in the city before he received a severe blow. News came by the direct route across from Ephesus that the Christians in Galatia were being rapidly led away into Judaism, owing to a raid on the province which had been organized by his opponents from Jerusalem. The Judaizers adhered to their usual

policy of belittling the authority of St. Paul: they made great use of the argument that he had never seen Christ; and that St. Peter, St. John, and the others who lived at Jerusalem were the only authorized exponents of Christianity, and that they were entirely favourable to Judaism. Thus they did injustice to the original Apostles no less than to St. Paul.

Discouraged for the moment, the Apostle quickly rallied his spiritual strength to deal with the crisis. The enemy is upon him, but he is not taken unprepared. With the heat of battle in his soul he composes the letter to the Galatians, the Magna Charta of Christian liberty. Its theme is universal: it deals with the conflict between the spirit and the letter; between law and liberty; between external authority and internal conviction. It is a battle that must be fought out in every generation; a struggle which in one form or another must be encountered by every individual. The opponents of the Apostle pleaded the principles of authority and antiquity to no purpose; St. Paul is wholeheartedly on the side of progress. Nowhere does he express more decisively and in more vigorous language his sense of the impassable chasm which lay between the Old and the New. The language he employs enables us to gauge the fierceness of the fight and the determination with which he held to his principles.

"Behold, I, Paul, say unto you that if ye receive circumcision Christ shall profit you nothing," he

writes to the Galatians, who were on the point of slipping away into Judaism, adding his own name to give solemnity to such a decisive declaration. These startling words pass through our minds without conveying much meaning when we read or hear them to-day. But think what Christ meant to St. Paul, and then the force and significance of the astounding statement will become plain. The incompatibility of the New and the Old is enunciated in language which is, if possible, still more startling, in the following words, " Ye are severed from Christ . . . ye are fallen away from grace " (Gal. v. 2—4). There can be no contact between Christ and legalism.

The argument of his opponents that he must have depended on men for his knowledge of the Gospel is responsible for the autobiographical interest of this letter, but its greatest importance is due to the masterly manner in which it expounds the principles which are involved in this ever-recurring conflict. In the vast work of reconstruction which lies before the twentieth century the Epistle to the Galatians will be re-discovered.

The Epistle to the Romans was also written from Corinth. It was dispatched to Italy by Phœbe, a deaconess connected with Cenchræa, one of the ports of Corinth which we have already met in the history (Rom. xvi. 1). The letter is important from our immediate point of view, because it gives an interesting declaration of the Apostle's plans at the time for which the Acts has failed us. His

thoughts are ever winging their way westward; and, although he has only travelled as far as Achaia, his ambition is to arrive at the other end of the Mediterranean and visit Spain. He announces this plan to the Romans, and declares that on this great westerly journey he will gratify his long-cherished wish of visiting the capital city. He has no more place in the regions of Achaia; he has preached the Gospel as far as Illyricum; the next stage westward is Rome (Rom. xv. 18—29). Part of Illyricum is familiar to the modern reader as Montenegro and Albania.

He tells the Romans, although they can take no part in it, of the collection which he has organized in the four provinces. He is on the way to bring the contributions to Jerusalem. But he knows the inveterateness of the Jewish hostility. The perils of a visit to Jerusalem have been increased a hundredfold by their recent attack on Galatia, and the decisive letter he had written. His mind is full of forebodings, and he solemnly intreats the prayers of the Romans whom he had never seen, that he may be delivered from them that are disobedient in Jerusalem (xv. 30—32).

The Apostle had arranged to sail from Cenchræa to Syria, as he had done on his previous visit to Corinth (Acts xviii. 18; xx. 3), but he was prevented from carrying out his purpose by a plot of the Jews, which compelled him to go northwards into Macedonia, and round by Troas. This incident at the beginning of his homeward journey was no very

happy omen of the reception which awaited him at Jerusalem. At this point of the narrative the Book of the Acts recovers its interest. Its unexpected silence about the nine months causes a sense of incompleteness such as is sometimes felt at the sudden ending of the book. Although St. Luke mentions the delegates who travelled in the Apostle's company he is entirely silent about the collection which was of cardinal importance in St. Paul's scheme of things. The reappearance of the word "us" in xx. 5, shows us that St. Luke joined the company at Philippi. In this town the passover was celebrated, which reminds us that the year before this feast had been kept at Ephesus, as we gather from the well-known passage in 1 Corinthians, which was written from that city (1 Cor. v. 7, 8).

The Apostle took ship at Neapolis for Troas, whither a number of his companions had preceded him, and were awaiting his arrival. Five days were occupied on this passage, which, on a previous occasion in the contrary direction, had been made in two (xvi. 11). He spent a week at Troas, and his farewell meeting with the believers was interrupted by the incident of Eutychus. The delegates, including St. Luke, took ship from Troas and sailed round the promontory of Lectum to Assos; but St. Paul, who wished to remain as long as possible with the people from whom he had departed so abruptly at his last visit (2 Cor. ii. 12, 13), determined to take the shorter route by land.

The journey down the coast of Asia is interesting

from the number of places, famed in song and story, which are mentioned. At Assos St. Paul joined his companions, and the ship put out for Mitylene, the chief town of the famous island Lesbos, which was visible out at sea. Lesbos could point to a number of famous citizens; it was the home of Sappho—the Sappho of the inevitable quotation from Byron—the poetess who gave her name to the Sapphic metre; it was also the home of Alcæus, the inventor of the Alcaic metre; and as for philosophy, Pittacus, one of the seven wise men of Greece, was a native of Lesbos. Terpander, the father of Greek music, was also an inhabitant of this island. Readers of Browning will remember the passage in "Christmas Eve" in which he describes the neglect of art consequent on the advent of Christianity:—

> "Gone, Music too! the air was stirred
> By happy wings: Terpander's bird
> (That when the cold came, fled away)
> Would tarry not the wintry day."

Craggy Chios, the next of the islands they passed, held one of the seven cities which claimed to be the birthplace of Homer. On a more prosaic plane, it was said to be the place in which the process of welding iron was discovered.

Samos, the island next touched at, was the home of hardy sailors. Men of Samos were reputed to be the first Greeks who sailed beyond the Pillars of Hercules, out of the Mediterranean, into the Atlantic. The temple of Hera at Samos was

described by Herodotus as the largest he had ever seen, but it was surpassed at a later date by the temple of Artemis at Ephesus. Under the celebrated tyrant, Polycrates, Samos attained the zenith of its splendour and was mistress of the Ægean. Everybody is acquainted with the story of his ring, the subject of Schiller's poem. The channel between the island and the coast of Asia is only a mile in width, and in this narrow passage the Grecian fleet gained the decisive victory of Mycale over the Persians. The mountain which gives its name to this sea-fight is situated on the mainland between Ephesus and Miletus. The ship had already passed Ephesus, and, as the Apostle's intention to spend Pentecost in Jerusalem did not permit him to delay in Asia, he wrote to the Ephesian elders to meet him at Miletus.

Miletus was situated at the mouth of the Meander, a river which, by reason of its winding course, has enriched our language with the verb " to meander." In the ill-starred revolt of the Ionic cities against the Persians, Miletus was the centre of the rebellion. The vengeance of Darius was ruthless, and Miletus never completely recovered from the blow. As a result of this disaster and the silting up of the harbour, she fell from her pride of place, and Ephesus succeeded as the chief seaport of Asia. Miletus was the home of the philosopher Thales, and by way of contrast, was also the native place of Aspasia, the celebrated companion of Pericles.

It is interesting to compare the touching address

to the elders with the letter to the angel of the church at Ephesus, in the Revelation (ii. 1—7). It will be seen that, at the later date, the warnings which St. Paul utters here had come true, and the church is threatened with the removal of her candlestick, except she repent and do the former works. This speech is also memorable as preserving a saying of our Lord, which is not recorded in the Gospels.

Cos, the island next mentioned, was celebrated for its temple to Æsculapius, the god of healing. Naturally there was a great medical school on the island, and Luke, "the beloved physician," would have a special interest in the town which was associated with the renowned medical writer, Hippocrates. If there be any truth in the tradition which makes St. Luke an artist, Cos would have another great attraction for him owing to its connection with Apelles, the most celebrated painter of antiquity. His picture of Alexander the Great holding a thunderbolt was a masterpiece, but when the Macedonian conqueror visited his studio, Apelles was not greatly impressed by his knowledge of art. Apelles is credited with the authorship of the well-known saying, "Shoemaker, stick to the last." The story goes that, on hearing a cobbler criticize the painting of the shoes in a certain picture, he altered the faulty drawing, but when the man of wax and leather suggested improvements in the legs of the subject, he was promptly silenced in the proverbial words.

The last of the islands the ship touched at was Rhodes. It was a city of magnificent architecture, set in a garden of flowers, and the sun was said to shine every day. It was celebrated in the arts, and its most famous relic is the statue of Laocoon, which is declared by Pliny to be the work of Rhodian artists. Rhodes is most widely known for its Colossus, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. This was a statue to Apollo, the sun god, one hundred and five feet high, which stood at the entrance of the harbour. The idea that it stood across the port and that ships sailed underneath is an invention of the middle ages. The statue was overthrown by an earthquake, and was still lying there when St. Paul's ship visited the island. The ruins remained for several hundred years till they were sold to the Saracens, who removed them by means of nine hundred camels.

The next port touched at was Patara, on the mainland, in Lycia, where the Apostle was fortunate enough to find a ship bound for Syria, a circumstance which enabled him to carry out his plan of being in Jerusalem by Pentecost.

XIII

JERUSALEM

The coast of Syria came in sight and the ship put in at the harbour of Tyre, a city of the greatest antiquity. Some of the most celebrated prophecies in the Old Testament are connected with this ancient town. When it occupied the attention of the prophets, Tyre, the crowning city, whose merchants were princes, was situated on an island. But when the Apostle came there the island had been converted into a peninsula, and was connected with the mainland by the mole which Alexander had constructed in order to reduce the city. When he turned south after the battle of Issus, Tyre was ill-advised enough to shut her gates in his face, and the Macedonian was so enraged by the length of her resistance that he exacted sanguinary vengeance. The place is now a desolation.

The ship next called at Ptolemais, another town of ancient date. It is mentioned early in the Old Testament under the name of Acco (Jud. i. 31); but it attained its greatest celebrity in the time of the crusades, when, as St. Jean d'Acre, it was stormed by Richard Cœur de Lion. At the end of the eighteenth century the dogged defence of Acre by Sir Sidney Smith put an end to Napoleon's

ambitious Eastern projects. In the nineteenth century the place was reduced by a combined fleet under the command of Sir Charles Napier. The New Testament name Ptolemais came to it from the kings of Egypt. When Alexander died, this part of his Empire was divided between the Seleucid kings who reigned at Antioch and the Ptolemies, whose chief city was Alexandria. Cleopatra was a Ptolemy.

The third port on this coast which the ship called at was Cæsarea. This magnificent city and harbour had been called out of nothing, by the ambition of Herod the Great. It is now like Tyre, a wilderness, and Acre is the only one of the three which remains. Philip, one of the Seven, had established himself at Cæsarea. The reference to his daughters is interesting as showing the position taken by women in the primitive church, when, as St. Paul remarked, there was neither male nor female. The gift of prophecy probably corresponded to what we call preaching to-day, and was highly valued by the Apostle (1 Cor. xiv. 24).

At Cæsarea, the city in which he was afterwards to be imprisoned, the Apostle received a clear intimation of the experiences which awaited him at Jerusalem. The explicit declarations of the prophet merely coincided with the forebodings of his own heart, and caused more distress to his friends than to the Apostle himself. He was ready, not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus.

When the party started on the journey of seventy-five miles from Cæsarea to Jerusalem, it included a Cypriote named Mnason, who had been a disciple from early days, and with whom the Apostle was to lodge. We have nothing to show why this arrangement was preferable to an abode with his sister, supposing that she was settled at Jerusalem.

It seemed at first as though the gloomy forebodings of the Apostle were not to be realized. The party was gladly received by the brethren at Jerusalem, and the next day St. Paul and some of his Gentile companions met James and the presbyters of the local assembly for mutual counsel. None of the other Apostles is mentioned throughout the narrative, and it would appear that they had at last left Jerusalem and were preaching in cities and countries further afield. James seems to have remained to preside over the destinies of the Jewish Church. Jerusalem was crowded; and religious and political feelings were running high. Numbers of the adherents of the assembly at Jerusalem belonged also to the political party of the Zealots, who, with the watchword of the Law, were kindling the passions of the people for the war which broke out about thirteen years later. Wild stories were flying from mouth to mouth about Jews in foreign lands who were renouncing the Law at the bidding of an apostate; and distorted versions of the recent expedition to Galatia increased the fury of the excited patriots.

It was necessary then, in the opinion of the men

who knew the state of feeling at Jerusalem, that the Apostle should show that he too was no less orthodox as a Jew than the party which was turning its faith into a political shibboleth. James, or whoever was the spokesman of the presbyters on this occasion, pointed out that there were thousands of believers in the city who were Zealots of the Law; and that they were obstinately convinced that the Apostle had led the foreign Jews in paths of disloyalty to Moses and the Jewish faith. In order to disarm the hostility of those who were exasperated by these reports it was suggested that the Apostle should show himself before the crowds assembled for the festival as an orthodox Jew, and should become responsible for the expenses of some men who had taken the Nazirite vow.

We need feel no surprise that the Apostle fell in with this plan although it has often been asserted that the incident is unhistorical, since such compliance would be inconsistent with his principles. St. Paul fought for the liberty of the Gentiles, but he never forgot that he was himself a Pharisee. To the Jews he was prepared to become a Jew (1 Cor. ix. 20). He had organized the great collection in the four provinces in order to prove that he nourished no ill-feeling against the Jews of Jerusalem. The second letter to the Corinthians shows the trouble he took about the matter; and it was not probable that he would run the risk of spoiling its effect by declining to accept such a practical suggestion. To bear the expenses of poor Nazirites was a very common form of

Jewish benevolence; but the ill-success which attended this plan, although not inherent in it, may be taken as an indication of the futility of endeavouring to placate those who are determined to cherish a grievance.

The Apostle, therefore, attended in the Temple and went through the prescribed ceremonial just as though he had never spoken a syllable of Greek, nor spent a day outside Jerusalem. But before the week drew to an end the storm broke over his head. He was recognized by some Jews of Asia, whose memory was stimulated by uncomfortable reminiscences of his success with the Gentiles of Ephesus. With true Eastern volubility and noise they raised an uproar among the festival crowds. "Men of Israel, help!" they shrieked: "this is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the Jews, against the Law, and against the Temple. He has brought Gentiles into the Holy place and polluted the Temple." Any one of these charges would have been murderous with a mob in the electric condition of religious and political feeling which pervaded Jerusalem at that time. The effect of the whole, and particularly of the last, may be conceived. There was no foundation whatever for the charge of polluting the Temple—the punishment for which was death. The Asian Jews had noticed the Apostle walking in the city with Trophimus the Ephesian. That fact was sufficient to furnish them with the cry that Gentiles had been brought into the Temple. Of course the charge was not true; but theological warfare, whether Jewish or Christian, has generally

been characterized by a dearth of scruples and an abundance of hatred.

In a moment the Apostle was surrounded by a howling mob of his countrymen, with their faces distorted by the violence of their passion. They dragged him out of the Temple while the gate was shut, lest the sacred area should be polluted by blood. Then the blows fell, and he would speedily have been dispatched but for the arrival of the Roman troops. The fortress of Antonia was connected with the Temple, and at festival times the soldiers were kept under arms. The officer in charge had been notified at the beginning of the tumult and arrived in time to save the Apostle's life. St. Paul was seized and bound with chains to the wrists of two soldiers, and Claudius Lysias, who held the Jerusalem command, endeavoured to ascertain the cause of the riot. But as nothing could be elicited from the shrieking mob he commanded the prisoner to be brought into the fortress. When they approached the stairs the violence of the crowd was so great that St. Paul had to be lifted up by the soldiers.

As the doors of Antonia were about to close on him the Apostle addressed the commander. The ears of the worthy soldier were filled by the Aramaic accents of the tumultuous crowd, and great was his astonishment when this torn and battered individual spoke to him in Greek. A riot on such an extensive scale could have had only one meaning for Claudius Lysias. An Egyptian impostor had drawn large crowds to the Mount of Olives a month or so ago,

during Passover time, giving out that he was the Messiah and that the walls of Jerusalem would fall down at his approach. Felix, the procurator, had descended on the rabble with his troops and scattered them with some slaughter, but the fanatical leader had not been captured. Lysias was convinced that he held the Egyptian a prisoner, until the Greek words of the Apostle convinced him of his mistake. St. Paul informs him that he is not an Egyptian, but a Jew of Tarsus of Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city.

The commander gave him leave to speak to the people, who were still howling for his death. It was no longer in Greek that the Apostle spoke, and when the Hebrew words reached the ears of the mob a strange stillness fell on them all. It is important to notice the Apostle's choice of topics in this speech; everything which could possibly offend the susceptibilities of the people is sedulously avoided, while in the forefront he places all those matters which would be likely to conciliate their goodwill. On these lines he addresses the crowd in a speech which is remarkable as containing a reference to the early crime of the murder of Stephen. But he comes to speak of the visit to Jerusalem, and a vision, not recorded elsewhere, in which the Lord said to him, " Depart : for I will send thee far hence to the Gentiles." When the hated word " Gentiles " is mentioned the passion of the mob breaks out afresh. With redoubled fury they demand his instant execution, and Lysias, who understood nothing of the Hebrew speech, is more bewildered than ever.

But torture will quickly elicit the facts of the case, and he gives the order that the prisoner should be examined by scourging. The Apostle was stretched to the post; but as the lash was about to descend he notified the centurion in charge of the proceedings that he was possessed of the Roman franchise. The centurion immediately reported this fact, which completely altered the aspect of the case, to the commander of the fortress. The bewilderment of Lysias reached its height. He comes to the prisoner and demands whether he is a Roman. Learning that this is so, he volunteers the information that he only obtained the citizenship as the result of a considerable payment; but the Apostle replies that he was born a Roman. On this the commander ordered him to be released from the torture-post; no doubt congratulating himself on the narrow margin by which he had escaped the terrible crime of scourging a citizen, and cursing the fate which had ordained that he should hold the command in a city where such things were possible.

But next morning he brought the prisoner before the Jewish Sanhedrin, determined to find out the cause of the riot. When St. Paul appeared before the Council of Seventy he could not forget that he had shared in their deliberations at the trial of Stephen. Among the party of the Pharisees he would recognize Symeon and Jesus, the sons of his master, Gamaliel; while the Sadducees numbered among their supporters the sons of Annas, who had taken part in the trial of Christ twenty-six years

earlier. Had it not been for the Damascus revelation the Apostle might have held an honoured position among his judges. An observer in the audience, who knew his story, might have reflected that fate had played him a sorry trick. But no such thought entered St. Paul's mind.

The president of the assembly was Ananias. St. Paul's warning, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall," was realized during the war, when this overbearing priest was killed, as Jonathan had been, by the Assassins.

As St. Paul was a Pharisee he determined to enlist the sympathies of this party, and cries out that he was a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee, and a firm believer in the resurrection. This declaration threw the assembly into confusion. Theological hatreds were unchained; and the prisoner was forgotten for the moment, while a splendid wrangle was set on foot between the rival parties, who hurled their arguments and denunciations at each other with a racket which was genuinely Oriental. The fury of the belligerents rose to such a pitch that Lysias became anxious for the safety of his prisoner; the military intervened, the Apostle was again confined in Antonia, and that night in the barracks a vision came to him with the assurance that, as he had testified at Jerusalem, so must he also bear witness for the Lord in the capital of the Empire, Rome.

Next day his enemies formed another plot to destroy the Apostle. It was arranged that he should be assassinated as he was being conducted to another

session of the Sanhedrin. This could easily have been accomplished. The Assassins (Sicarii, Acts xxi. 38), had become an institution in the country and city since the murder of Jonathan, and, given a favourable opportunity, the apostate Jew would have met the same fate as the high priest. We are not informed how the plot became known to the Apostle's nephew ; but when Lysias becomes aware of it he quickly recognizes that Jerusalem is not the place for his prisoner. A Jew might be killed without much loss ; but this Jew happened to be a Roman citizen, and the responsibility of keeping him in the tumultuous city was entirely too great to be borne. The commander immediately decided to send St. Paul to Cæsarea to the procurator. At nine o'clock on the same evening the party set out from Jerusalem, and travelling all night it arrived next day at Antipatris, not far from Cæsarea, from which point the infantry returned to Antonia. The cavalry escorted the prisoner the remainder of the way to Cæsarea, and he was brought before Felix. Naturally, the first question the procurator asked was what was the province to which he belonged, and when he heard that he was from Cilicia, he ordered him to be confined in Herod's prætorium. So the Apostle finds himself a prisoner in the town where a few days before he had disembarked.

XIV

CÆSAREA

THE Apostle's trial having been remitted to Cæsarea, Ananias set out to the coast to make his triumph secure. It was to be a formal trial, before a Roman tribunal, where the partizan methods of the Jewish Sanhedrin would meet with scant toleration. The usages of an Imperial court of justice would be somewhat unfamiliar to the high priest, and since he was determined to neglect nothing which might help to terminate the career of the man he regarded as the chief enemy of Judaism, he committed the case to the conduct of a professional counsel. He hoped by the legal skill of this orator to succeed in having the venue of the trial changed to Jerusalem, where he would have secured the Apostle's fate without difficulty. But the high priest did not understand that it is beyond the power of the most astute and eloquent counsel to turn a bad case into a good one.

The interest of the story now shifts to Cæsarea, where a three years' imprisonment awaited the Apostle. It will be necessary to form some idea of this city, which has frequently appeared in the history. Originally nothing but a fishing village called Strato's Tower, on a stretch of coast which

was devoid of a harbour, it had been transformed by Herod the Great, who gave his passion for architecture unstinted scope, into a capital of lordly buildings and a harbour as large as the Piræus at Athens. A gigantic mole gave security to the shipping; on land the prominent buildings were a magnificent temple dedicated to Augustus, after whom the new capital was styled Cæsarea, the theatre in which Herod Agrippa I. died (Acts xii. 21), the amphitheatre, and the palace which Herod had built for himself, and which was now used as the official residence of the procurator. This latter edifice was called the Prætorium, and within its walls the Apostle was confined.

The population of the city was composed of Jews and Greeks; and the enmity of these peoples was more bitter at Cæsarea than elsewhere. They were continually quarrelling over the question whether Cæsarea was a Jewish or a Greek city; one party pointed to the fact that the original hamlet was a Greek settlement, while the other triumphantly asserted that the present city was entirely due to Herod. It was in Cæsarea, thirteen or fourteen years later, that the first bloodshed in the Jewish war occurred, when over twenty thousand Jews were slaughtered; it was also in Cæsarea that Vespasian, who held the command of the forces in Palestine during the war, was proclaimed Emperor of Rome.

We must now endeavour to form some idea of Felix, the judge before whom St. Paul appeared. He had risen from a very low rank in the social

scale. He and his brother Pallas had been slaves in the household of Antonia, the mother of the Emperor Claudius. As a recompense for their services this lady granted them their liberty, and on her death they continued to serve the Emperor as freedmen. Pallas soon obtained a highly important position in the palace, and in a short time became one of the most influential of the freedmen, who governed the Emperor, who nominally governed the Empire.

On the death of Messalina, the infamous third wife of Claudius, many ladies distinguished by their wealth and beauty were claimants for the honour of becoming the Imperial consort. Their pretensions were urged on the Emperor by persons of influence. Tacitus has left us an interesting record of the dismay which the Emperor's unwedded condition caused in the palace, and of the intrigues of the freedmen to provide an Empress. It was recognized that Claudius had been framed by nature to be governed by some woman. Pallas was fortunate enough to urge the claims of Agrippina, who, by a previous marriage, was the mother of Nero, or Domitius, as he was then called, and she eventually married Claudius in spite of the fact that they were uncle and niece. The result of the arrangement was that, as Claudius was an imbecile, Pallas became the most powerful person in the Empire, second to Agrippina alone.

About this time the Jews had important business to transact with the Emperor at Rome which they

were enabled to carry through by the influence of Pallas. The price of his complaisance was that they should petition the Emperor to appoint his brother Felix procurator of Palestine. His nomination was announced in 50, and he had been about six years in office when St. Paul appeared before him at Cæsarea.

None of the historians, Biblical, Jewish or Roman, has anything that is good to say of Felix. Josephus, the Jew, paints his character in the blackest terms, while Tacitus, the Roman, has impaled him for all time on one of his deadly antitheses. Tacitus, whose eyes were ever turned back to the Republic, had little love for the Empire. But of all the peculiarities of Imperial government, none was more detestable to his soul than the facility with which liberated slaves edged their way to positions of supreme power. His reference to Felix is a good example of his unrivalled power of hitting off a character in the smallest number of words. He says that he exercised the power of a king with the soul of a slave.

One of his crimes was particularly base. The high priest, who as representative of the nation had been instrumental in procuring his appointment, was named Jonathan. After some experience of the procurator's administration, Jonathan ventured on a remonstrance. Felix immediately bribed one of the priest's friends to take order for his assassination. The murder was committed at Passover time in Jerusalem. The high priest was surrounded

by a number of men, ostensibly worshippers ; none saw the hand that struck the fatal blow. Felix took care that no inquiry should be instituted. This crime became a fatal precedent and greatly encouraged the growth of bands of assassins who roamed the country (Acts xxi. 38).

Another deed of heartless treachery is associated with the name of Felix. Palestine was in a very disturbed condition, and the procurator found it impossible to hunt down the marauding bands by which the country was overrun. The leader of the brigands, Eleazar, had successfully evaded all the legitimate devices which the Roman procurator employed to capture him. But Felix had recourse to methods which were dishonourable. He pretended to be struck by the courage of the outlaw, asked him to visit him under the most ample pledges of personal security, but when Eleazar was in his power, he loaded him with chains and dispatched him to Rome. Eleazar was a good type of the sort of man to whom our Lord referred when He asked those who captured Him in Gethsemane why they had come out against Him as a brigand (Mark xiv. 48). The word "thief" in the Authorized Version is entirely inadequate to convey the meaning.

When St. Paul appeared before Felix, all Palestine was talking about his success against the Egyptian fanatic. This visionary had appeared in Jerusalem during the Passover of this year, when St. Paul was in Philippi. The Acts speaks of four thousand

men who followed him, but in Josephus the number has swelled to thirty thousand. In these times of confusion, when events were working up to the rebellion, the number of his adherents grew rapidly. He appeared on the Mount of Olives, announced that he was commissioned to expel the Romans and restore the kingdom to Israel, and he assured his deluded followers that the walls of Jerusalem would fall down before him. Felix and his troops fell on the disorganized mob and scattered them to the winds with considerable slaughter. The leader escaped, but when Lysias heard of the Jerusalem riot about St. Paul, he was quite certain he had secured the Egyptian (Acts xxi. 38). Tertullus adroitly alluded to this recent service of Felix in his opening compliment, but he does not feel bound to mention all that might be urged on the other side of the account.

So the trial of St. Paul was opened before a Roman procurator at Cæsarea. It is impossible not to think of our Lord's trial at Jerusalem before an earlier procurator. Felix was not so sensitive to Jewish turbulence as Pilate, and showed himself determined to maintain the dignity of Roman legal procedure. The Latin form of the speech of Tertullus has often been noticed, and is due to the fact that he addressed the court in that tongue. If the proceedings were conducted in Latin, St. Paul's speech would probably have been translated, because we have no reason to suppose that he knew more of that language than such words as a

traveller would necessarily have become acquainted with on his journeyings. But this is a point which is not settled.

The suppression of the Egyptian false prophet lent a show of truth to the opening compliment of Tertullus sufficient to save it from appearing ridiculous. The actual condition of the country was calamitous, and it grew gradually and inevitably worse until the confusion issued in open war. The charge which was brought against the Apostle was familiar to him by this time. He had often heard it on the lips of wildly excited Jews in the synagogues of many cities; now he hears it from the lips of a barrister in a Roman court of justice. He is, it appears, a pestilent fellow—he instigates the Jews to insurrection, he is the leader of the Nazarene sectaries, and, chief count of all, he is an apostate Jew who has endeavoured to pollute the Temple.

When Tertullus had concluded his statement, Felix, who was seated on the *bema*, beckoned curtly to St. Paul to make his defence. The Apostle, like the barrister, addressed a few opening words to the judge personally, but he is careful to avoid an imitation of his fulsome and unscrupulous compliments. Felix had been procurator of Judæa for several years, and since he was acquainted with the idiosyncrasies of the people, he would be better qualified to determine on what side the truth lay.

When the Apostle opened his defence, it became evident that his opponents had no case whatever.

He makes it clear that he did not attempt to profane the Temple; he had come from abroad as a devout worshipper; he had not sought to raise a riot in Jerusalem; his opponents were unable to bring evidence to support a single charge. It is true that he is a follower of the Way; his opponents called it a sect or a heresy; but he held it was the real religion of their forefathers. However, that was a question which was not likely to interest a Roman tribunal. He is so far from being a hater of the Jews that the occasion of his journey to Jerusalem was to bring assistance to his nation. The riot at Jerusalem had been caused by Jews from Asia. Why did they not appear at Cæsarea?

So, point by point, the Apostle rebutted the charges which had been urged against him; and although Ananias is the leading man of the nation, while St. Paul has no influence whatever, he is unable to secure the condemnation of the prisoner, because Felix is determined to maintain Roman impartiality. It is true that he should have released the Apostle after such a sweeping refutation of the accusations of the prosecution, but some doubt remained in the procurator's mind as to what actually had occurred at Jerusalem, and therefore he remanded the case until the chiliarch Lysias should appear at Cæsarea. We learn from the Acts that Felix, who, like many Romans, was very superstitious and would naturally have inquired into Jewish beliefs, had an accurate knowledge of the Way.

During the period of remand which, as the chiliarch did not come to Cæsarea, lasted for two years, the Apostle was treated with great indulgence, and the hardships of confinement were mitigated by the presence of his friends, who were allowed free access to him. Philip was probably still in the city, and St. Luke and Aristarchus were constantly by the Apostle's side. Lysias did not come to Cæsarea; no doubt obstacles were put in the way by the Apostle's enemies, who dreaded the turn which the straightforward narrative of the soldier might give to the proceedings.

After some days the Apostle was again summoned before the procurator; on this occasion he does not appear in the public court, but is granted a private audience in the chamber of his judge. When St. Paul was led in he saw that Felix was accompanied by Drusilla, the beautiful Jewess of the Herodian family to whom he was married. It is not a very improbable conjecture that Simon Magus was also one of the governor's party. Felix was greatly influenced by this Jewish impostor, who has sometimes been identified with the Simon of Acts viii. It was owing to his intrigues that Felix and Drusilla were now living together. This beautiful girl, who was only eighteen, had been the wife of the king of Emessa. She was the youngest daughter of Herod Agrippa I., whose death is related in Acts xii.; and her eldest sister was the Bernice of Acts xxv. Bernice was wildly jealous of the beauty of Drusilla, and her bitter persecution was probably the cause of

the disaster in the married life of her sister. Felix became acquainted with Drusilla at the court of her brother Herod Agrippa II., who also is mentioned in the next chapter. Inflamed by her striking beauty he entrusted to Simon Magus the task of detaching her from her husband. The wily impostor wrought so forcibly on the imagination of the girl of sixteen that although a king's daughter, she was now the wife of the procurator who was a freedman.

It was, then, to a company of people who were thoroughly corrupt that the Apostle was introduced. On the one hand he was not intimidated, nor was he unduly self-assertive on the other. The consciousness of his message relieved him of embarrassment. To the procurator, who in his administration had little thought but of his own interests, he spoke of righteousness; to his consort, whose only law of life was the gratification of her passionate whims, he spoke of self-control; to the consciences of both he drove home the terrifying fact of the day of reckoning. Drusilla probably was not much moved; she may have been interested at first by the strange appearance of the speaker and his fiery oratory, but her thoughts soon flew elsewhere. The superstitious voluptuary Felix was terrified, and trembled. Why should not this extraordinary prisoner know as much about God as Simon Magus? If he did, and if what he said were true, there was matter enough in it to give the procurator an uneasy night. The Apostle is abruptly dismissed, Felix engaging to hear him again when business should permit.

The Apostle was detained in Cæsarea two years, Felix sending for him from time to time and hoping that a bribe would be offered for an expeditious settlement of the case. At the end of this period, his appointment was brought to an end by a dispatch from Rome. Felix had now held the office for eight years, which was much longer than was generally allowed by Imperial policy.

Before his departure, and during the time of the Apostle's confinement there, an event took place in Cæsarea which cannot be passed without mention. Since the population of the city was composed of Jews and Greeks, conflicts between these turbulent nationalities were more frequent than was desirable. It was the question of the ownership of the city which most frequently led to rioting. The Greeks and Syrians insisted on the fact that the town was Greek originally, while the Jews came to the charge with the cry that but for Herod the Great the place would have remained nothing but a fishing hamlet. A particularly sanguinary riot broke out shortly before Felix departed for Rome, and gave him an opportunity of venting some of the hatred he cherished for the people he governed. The Jews were gaining the upper hand when the procurator appeared on the scene. As they hesitated to retire, he fell upon them with all his troops; there was great carnage, and the day remained a black memory to the Jews.

Events like this reminded the procurator that the Jews could make his position at Rome extremely

uncomfortable. When his recall was received, one of the methods he adopted to forestall the coming storm was to leave the Apostle in prison. But in spite of his efforts, he was unable to disarm the rage of the Jews. An influential deputation sailed for Rome with an alarming catalogue of his official malpractices to lay before the Emperor. Felix hoped to baffle his prosecutors by the influence of his brother Pallas. But Nero was now firmly established on the throne, and although he owed much to the powerful freedman, the influence of Pallas had been for some time on the wane. Nero was heartily tired of his mother Agrippina, whose creature Pallas had been, and was plotting for her death, so that Pallas had to exert every atom of his rapidly declining power to rescue his brother. He succeeded in the attempt ; Felix was spared a trial, but he had to disgorge most of his ill-gotten wealth, and the remainder of his days was spent in obscurity and disgrace.

Festus, the new procurator appointed by Nero, made his state entry at Cæsarea. When the formalities connected with his reception were completed, he paid a visit to Jerusalem, as a compliment to the people he was to govern, and with the intention of securing their goodwill. The influential Jews who received him in the ancient capital understood the art of working on a man who was in unfamiliar surroundings, and promptly solicited his interest against St. Paul, who was represented as a determined enemy of their religion.

They urged that the case was entirely conversant with religious questions and should be dealt with by the Sanhedrin; by which body indeed it might have been settled years before had it not been for the officious zeal of the commander of Antonia, who, on his own responsibility, had transferred the prisoner to Cæsarea. But Festus is not to be deceived by the plausible speech of the courtly elders. The affair was not simple; a moment might transform his petitioners from grave-visaged statesmen into frantic bigots thirsting for blood. Their intention was to assassinate the Apostle by a wayside ambuscade. Festus declines to do anything in the matter until he has investigated it officially; but he invites the accusers to travel to Cæsarea in his company.

After spending a little more than a week in Jerusalem Festus returned to Cæsarea, and the next day, taking his seat on the *bema*, commanded the Apostle to be produced. But the proceedings ended in the same deadlock. Festus had full opportunity of viewing the Jewish authorities from a different standpoint, as they plied their accusations with genuinely Oriental intensity and volubility. St. Paul coolly refutes the charges, and makes it clear to the procurator that it is beyond the power of his enemies to prove one of the facts they allege against him.

However, it appears to be a question of religion, and one in which the assistance of assessors trained in the Jewish law might be of benefit to the judge.

Festus is willing to please his new subjects, but is not prepared to grant all they wish. He therefore asks the prisoner whether he has any objection to the trial being held at Jerusalem, not of course by the Sanhedrin, but in the Imperial court, and under the conduct of the procurator himself. Had this course been carried out we should have had an exact repetition of the trial of our Lord before the earlier procurator, Pilate. St. Paul knew well the force of hatred that was pent up in that city. He feels secure in the Roman capital ; but he knows that his life would be of little value in the midst of the fanatics of Jerusalem.

The proposal of the procurator determined St. Paul to fall back upon the plan he held in reserve. His Roman citizenship carried with it the right of appeal from all provincial jurisdictions to the supreme courts at Rome. The utterance of the single word *appello* was sufficient to bring the proceedings to an end. This is the course St. Paul determines to follow. He points out that the case ought to be settled at Cæsarea ; he has done no wrong to the Jews and they have entirely failed to prove their case ; he is standing at Cæsar's judgment seat ; he appeals to Cæsar.

We gather from the abrupt reply of Festus that he is somewhat nettled by this summary setting aside of the new authority, which sat so pleasantly upon him. But there was nothing to be done. The right of appeal was carefully limited by restrictions to prevent its abuse, but a conference with his

assessors showed that there was no plea on which it could be disallowed in the present instance. He therefore curtly informs the prisoner that his case will be remitted to Rome for the decision of the Emperor.

The arrival of a new procurator was invariably made the occasion of visits of state by neighbouring potentates who owed their authority to Rome, and never lost an opportunity of doing grace to her representatives. Herod Agrippa II., who governed the districts to the north-east of the Sea of Galilee, arrived in Cæsarea with a great retinue to salute the newly-installed procurator of Palestine, who was to rule over the country which had once owned the sway of his ancestor, Herod the Great. This king was the last of the Herods and a man of great influence in Jewish affairs. He was the guardian of the Temple, and enjoyed the right of appointing the high priest. He and his three sisters were the offspring of Herod Agrippa I., who comes into the Acts in chapter xii. None of his sisters was graced with a savoury reputation, though each could boast the traditional beauty of the Herods. We have already touched on some incidents in the career of the youngest of the sisters, Drusilla. The second sister, Mariamne, is not mentioned in the sacred record, but her story does not differ in any important respect from theirs ; she also deserted her husband. Bernice, the eldest, was the object of the gravest charges. In her first marriage she had chosen her uncle as husband, and after his death and another

marriage with Polemo, king of Cilicia, she lived much with her brother, in whose company she now appears in Cæsarea. The worst interpretation was placed on their association, and noise of the scandal had travelled so far beyond the confines of Syria that it is alluded to in a celebrated verse of Juvenal. The Herod family was well known at Rome, where many of its members spent their youth as hostages. There was a special reason why Bernice's name should be remembered in the capital. About ten years after St. Paul appeared before her at Cæsarea, Titus, who was engaged in the Jewish war and the destruction of Jerusalem, while his father Vespasian was securing the Empire, became completely enslaved by her beauty. On his return to Rome, Bernice and her brother followed and took up their residence in the Imperial palace. There is little doubt that Titus would have made her Empress had it not been evident that public opinion in the capital would not sanction such an alliance.

It was before this notorious brother and sister that St. Paul was now to present his case, as he had previously done before the younger sister Drusilla. Festus, who realized that the solution of a Jewish theological problem was beyond his faculties, propounded the matter to Agrippa, since it was natural to suppose that one who was the guardian of the Temple and entrusted with the appointment of the high priest would be able to bring light into the darkness. The words in which he introduced

the matter to the attention of the king are memorable, since they contain a noteworthy expression of the spirit which animated the procedure of the Roman courts. "It is not the custom of the Romans to give up any man, before that the accused have the accusers face to face, and have had opportunity to make his defence concerning the matter laid against him." Incidentally this explains the Apostle's determination not to submit himself to the jurisdiction of a Jewish tribunal at Jerusalem.

The hall of audience presented a magnificent appearance next day, when Agrippa and Bernice made their appearance in state. Everything which Oriental ingenuity and love of garish display could suggest was brought into play by the Herods to honour the representative of Nero, while on their side the Romans omitted no ceremonial observance which could add dignity to the occasion. Everybody of note in Cæsarea was present, and when St. Paul was led in the hall was resplendent with the colour of uniforms and the gleam of armour.

Festus briefly outlined the object of the assembly. It was no light matter. The Jewish population of Jerusalem and Cæsarea had risen against this man, demanding his death. The procurator had convinced himself that the prisoner was innocent of any crime calling for such a penalty. But the Apostle had appealed to Cæsar, and in the report of the case to the authorities at Rome it would be necessary to formulate a definite charge. He hopes that the day's proceedings will elicit the cause of the Jews'

hatred, "since," he concludes, "it seemeth to me unreasonable, in sending a prisoner, not withal to signify the charges against him."

It is worth noting that in verse twenty-six the procurator refers to the Emperor as "my Lord." The expression is an indication of the growth of servility in the subject which rendered possible the encroachments of the Emperors. The correlative of lord is slave, and by reason of this fact the title was systematically rejected by Augustus, whose policy was to cloak the reality of the Imperial power, so far as might be, under the names and titles which had prevailed under the Republic. Succeeding Emperors were not so heedful to spare the feelings of their subjects, or rather, since it is the slave that makes the tyrant, the spirit of liberty was dying out among men.

Agrippa throws a brief "Thou art permitted to speak for thyself" to the prisoner, and the Apostle begins a noble defence, the grandeur of which is everywhere evident, even in the outline which is given in the Acts. The usual personal reference to Agrippa was particularly happy. All men knew that he, unlike the newly arrived procurator, was "expert in all customs and questions which were among the Jews." With rugged and impetuous force the Apostle describes his life as a Pharisee and persecutor, down to the day of the journey to Damascus, which turned him into an adherent of the Way. The Voice which spoke to him then conveyed a warrant in completest terms for the

work among the Gentiles, which ever since had been the chief object of his life. Looking back on his work in the five provinces he can unreservedly claim that he " was not disobedient to the heavenly vision." It was for this reason that the Jews attacked him in the Temple, but he declares unhesitatingly that, however bitterly they may hate his work, he is ready to prove that he teaches nothing for which he cannot produce complete justification from Moses and the Prophets.

As St. Paul is in full career he is interrupted by Festus, who raises his voice to cut across the Apostle's eloquence. The cultured and cynical man of the world was in no mood to listen to what he took to be the meaningless vapourings of an enthusiast. His attitude was very much that of the philosophic poet of the period so finely hit off by Browning :

> " Thou canst not think a mere barbarian Jew
> As Paulus proves to be, one circumcised,
> Hath access to a secret shut from us ?
> Thou wrongest our philosophy, O king,
> In stooping to inquire of such an one."

Festus had received reports of the studious habits of the prisoner, and too lightly concluded that his wits had become crazed by poring over the parchments which contained the Old Testament writings. He quickly classes the Apostle as one of those enthusiasts whose reason has become impaired by incessant brooding on a fixed idea.

St. Paul's reply is firm and courteous, but

absorption in his subject has led him to forget the characteristics of the men to whom he was speaking. He appeals to the king for confirmation, affirming that the matters he has mentioned were not done in a corner. "King Agrippa," he cries, "believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest." But no more assistance is to be gained from the Oriental epicurean than from the Roman man of affairs. He meets the eager appeal of the Apostle with shafts of cool sarcasm. He is amused in stately fashion to think that this Jew who has become entangled in the meshes of Roman law should endeavour to make him a Nazarene. He had heard somewhere the nickname with which the wits of Antioch labelled the new sect. He passes it on to the Apostle with contempt. He, Agrippa, a Christian, and in such a speedy fashion, with so little persuasion! Here is a matter for mirth. If we can imagine a ruling prince to-day dealing with a fanatical member of the most universally disallowed of the unrecognized sects, the parallel will be seized. Little wonder that Agrippa turns the matter aside with a jest.

Not so St. Paul. Festus, Agrippa, and the notabilities and fashionable folk who thronged the hall were of the same opinion as Browning's Cleon already mentioned:

> "Certain slaves
> Who touched on this same isle preached Paul and Christ;
> And (as I gathered from a bystander)
> Their doctrines could be held by no sane man."

But to the Apostle " Christian " is not a term of opprobrium. It had brought him the secret of a happiness which life had not revealed to his judges. In simple words he expresses the wish that all his auditors resembled him except as regards his imprisonment.

But it was quite clear that the man was not guilty of serious crime. He was no doubt a harmless enthusiast, one of a race for which the world has little kindness. He might have been set at liberty without further proceedings, but the appeal to Cæsar had been made. It was impossible to retreat now ; he must go to Rome.

XV

VOYAGE TO ROME

The arrangements for the Apostle's journey did not occupy many days. He was to be one of a band of prisoners who were being forwarded to Rome in charge of a detachment of soldiers. The military guard was under the command of a subordinate officer named Julius.

A ship was lying in the harbour bound for Adramyttium, a port on the coast of Asia, not far from Troas. The plan was to make the journey on board this ship as far as the south of Asia, and then to complete the journey to Rome in some westward-bound ship which might be found in one of the Asiatic harbours. It is just possible that the intention may have been to make the complete journey to Adramyttium, and then to cross the Ægean, strike the great Egnatian Way, and so travel overland through Macedonia and Illyricum, and then by the Brundusium-Dyracchium route to Rome. This was the course followed when Ignatius was brought for martyrdom from Antioch to Rome.

St. Paul was not abandoned by his friends on the voyage. The use of the first personal pronoun informs us that St. Luke was present; while Aristarchus the Macedonian is mentioned by name. He had been in the company of St. Paul during the

riot at Ephesus (xix. 29), and had travelled with him on the journey to Jerusalem which had turned out so unfortunately (xx. 4). He appears to have remained in Palestine during the Apostle's detention at Cæsarea, and now he shares in the journey to Rome. He was a solace for the imprisoned Apostle at Rome as at Cæsarea, and is mentioned in two of the letters which the Apostle wrote from the city (Col. iv. 10; Philem. 24). He was a native of Thessalonica, and, as is indicated by the reference in Colossians, by nationality a Jew. St. Luke and Aristarchus had of course no official connection with the party in charge of Julius, and travelled as ordinary passengers, paying the usual fares. It is possible that St. Luke acted as ship's doctor.

As the vessel sailed northwards along the coast of Palestine and Syria, the Apostle's thoughts must have travelled back to the voyage he made southwards along the same coast as a boy. Jerusalem, which was his goal at that time, had proved but a harsh stepmother. A lifetime lay between; a life which had been broken in two by the vision outside Damascus, and wrenched violently from its destined course. He had been, as he phrases it, arrested by Christ (Phil. iii. 12); and now he is arrested by Rome.

As a boy, his ambition had been to visit Jerusalem; his manhood's longing was for the Imperial city. "When I was a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things" are his own words, seldom regarded to-day.

Voyage to Rome

Although the parting from his childhood's faith was accomplished only at the cost of a terrible struggle, it was inevitable that it should come. All his thoughts are now concentrated on the opportunity, scant though it may prove, of preaching the new faith in the Imperial capital.

On the second day of the voyage, the ship put into Sidon; on the previous journey the Apostle had called at Tyre (xxi. 3). St. Paul does not seem to have stood the voyage well, or perhaps he may have been ill provided with necessaries for the journey. In any case, the centurion, with considerate humanity, permits him to visit his friends in the town. Sidon is seldom mentioned in the New Testament, and then generally in connection with Tyre. These celebrated Phœnician towns had fared very differently at the hands of Alexander when he turned southwards after the battle of Issus. Tyre resisted, and was only overcome by the irresistible Macedonian after he had been at the incredible pains of connecting the island on which it was situated (Ezek. xxvii. 4) with the mainland by means of a gigantic mole. The rage of Alexander was so fierce that when the city was at last overcome, the horrors of the scene cannot be imagined. Sidon, on the other hand, had been led by hatred of the Persians to throw in her lot with the Macedonian, and it was largely through her co-operation that Alexander overthrew Tyre. St. Paul had preached in this neighbourhood when he went to Jerusalem on the matter of the great

controversy (xv.), and there were several of his friends among the local congregation. It was a Phœnician city of the greatest antiquity, and is mentioned by Homer. The wonderful robes of Andromache, the wife of Hector, were made by Sidonian women.

The kindness of Julius at Sidon is one of a large number of incidents in the Acts which throw light on the favourable attitude of Imperial officials to Christianity at this time. Writers who argue for the late date of the composition of the Book as a whole urge that it was written at a time when the attitude of the Empire to the Church had taken a decided turn for the worse, and that the incidents are selected and recorded with the apologetic design of reminding the persecutors that at an earlier date, consideration, or at least indifference, was the rule, rather than ferocity.

When the ship put out from Sidon, the wind had shifted some points to the north, and was blowing directly from the point they wished to make. Hence the direct line to Asia by the south of Cyprus, the line which was followed in xxi. 1, 2, had to be abandoned; and a course was laid which took them along the lee of the island—that is, as the wind was then blowing, along the eastern and northern coasts of Cyprus. The result of this alteration was that the Apostle sailed once again over the waters he had traversed when he first sailed with Barnabas out of Seleucia to Cyprus; and as the ship turned westwards to round the island, he could see on the

northern horizon the Taurus range lifting its peaks into the sky and indicating the situation of his native city.

From this point the ship, with the advantage of a land breeze and a favouring current, made rapid progress along that part of the Mediterranean which lies south of Cilicia and Pamphylia. The Apostle remembered his first journey, and as he looked to the distant coast-line, thought of the Galatian churches, and wondered whether the letter he sent them had made them more determined in the struggle for liberty. The ship put in at Myra in the south-west corner of Asia Minor, some distance to the west of Attalia, whence St. Paul had sailed when he first visited Galatia (xiv. 25).

An Alexandrian corn ship bound for Italy was lying in the harbour. Alexandria was one of the great granaries of Rome, and an extensive fleet of merchantmen was engaged in the traffic. It must not be supposed that the ship at Myra was out of her course. It is true that the general route from Alexandria was along the north coast of Africa, and then by way of Malta and Sicily to Italy. But when the prevailing wind was in the north-west, the ships had to follow a course which brought them to the south of Asia Minor, in order to avoid the peril of having the dreaded quicksands and shallows of the African shore on the lee. Lucian gives a lively account of a voyage in an Alexandrian merchantman which took this course.

The centurion transhipped his prisoners, thinking

this an excellent opportunity of finishing the voyage expeditiously; but no sooner had the ship left Myra than her misfortunes began. She was exposed to the force of the winds, which up to this point had been successfully avoided. The conditions were so extremely unfavourable that the run to Cnidus, only thirty miles further along, occupied many days. It is not clear whether the narrative here suggests that the wind did not suffer them to enter the port of Cnidus, or simply that they were compelled to abandon the western course and make to the south. They had lost the land breeze and the shelter of the coast; and being exposed to the full force of the westerly winds, were unable to make further progress. They turned in the direction of Crete, and sailing along its eastern and southern coast-line, had the protection of a weather shore. But even here they were unable entirely to avoid the head winds, and when they arrived at the place called Fair Havens, they were brought to a dead stop. The coast curved away to the north; they were left without shelter; progress was impossible.

It was now the middle of September; the great fast of the Jewish year, the day of atonement, had passed, and the time was in sight when navigation would cease for the winter months. St. Paul warned the centurion and the captain that if the voyage were continued it would prove disastrous; but the sailors determined to risk a run along the coast to Phœnix, if the wind should change. Phœnix was a harbour of the island which lay

further to the west, and was securely protected from storms by an island which was situated in front. The opportunity to leave Fair Havens, which was not altogether secure, and slip along the coast to a harbour which offered complete safety, was too tempting to be resisted. The winds which had retarded the voyage so far suddenly dropped, and one morning a south wind set in from the coast of Africa. This gave the captain exactly the opportunity for which he was waiting to make a short run along the coast to Phœnix.

But they had no success. The favouring wind was a siren to lure them to destruction. Fair Havens was not far behind them when the wind suddenly veered round to the north-east, and a howling storm called Euraquilo broke down on them from the land and drove them far from Crete. The short journey to Phœnix had been regarded in the light of a holiday cruise, with a fair wind and a smiling sea, and the ship's boat was towing behind. As the ship drove past Cauda, a small island thirty miles to the south of Crete, advantage was taken of the comparatively smooth water in the lee of the island to get the boat safely on deck. It was the first moment free from imminent peril which they had enjoyed since the storm burst on them. The ship had set out from Fair Havens so ill prepared for the storm which surprised them that she was severely strained by the buffeting of the waves, and the captain ordered her to be strengthened and held together by cables

passed under the keel. The brief moment of respite as they were hurried past Cauda was sufficient to enable them to make all ship-shape. Everything which could catch the wind was lowered; sufficient sail was spread to keep her head as close as might be to the wind; since if they had run before the wind, they would soon have found themselves on the Syrtis (the great sandbanks of the north African shore), the constant dread of mariners in these waters.

Not one of the two hundred and seventy-six souls on board ever forgot the fortnight of deadly peril which followed. The sun did not appear by day, nor the stars by night. The air was filled with the howling of the storm, the groaning of the spars, and prayers from the terror-stricken passengers to all the deities of Olympus. Erasmus has left us the classical description of the behaviour of passengers in a storm like this. English readers will find an adaptation of it in Charles Reade's "Cloister and the Hearth," in which we follow the history of the parents of Erasmus. But Erasmus himself had taken as his model the description given by Lucian of Samosata, the early satirist of Christianity, of the storm in which an Alexandrian ship similar to that in which the Apostle was travelling almost went down. In the motley crowd of passengers most of the pagan religions were represented; there were probably some Jews; and then there was the little company of Christians and St. Paul.

The ship laboured heavily in the waves and was

evidently becoming less buoyant. The cargo and as much of the rigging as could possibly be spared went by the side in the endeavour to lighten her. But the pitiless storm raged as furiously as ever; the chances of winning through to safety rapidly diminished, and at last despair took possession of all hearts. "All hope that we should be saved was now taken away."

But it is the hour of darkness which reveals the soul of a man. To the disheartened crowd on board St. Paul appears as a man of bronze. He announces to them the certainty of safety, since an angel of the God Whom he served had appeared to him in the visions of the night, telling him that he must appear in Rome before the Emperor, and that the lives of those who travelled in the ship would be spared.

For fourteen days, then, they battled with the Levanter, along that part of the Mediterranean which was called the Sea of Adria, and lay between Sicily and Malta on the west and Crete on the east. At the end of this time, the sailors knew that they were near some land. Soundings were taken and revealed that the water was rapidly shoaling; the depth quickly fell from twenty fathoms to fifteen. They would soon have been carried on shore, and as the ship broke up in the darkness, would have encountered great loss of life. Anchors were therefore let go from the stern, and the drift which had lasted so many days was at last stayed. As the ship strained at her cables, a longing, not to to be realized by those who have not been in similar

peril, for the day to break and disclose the shore before them, took possession of their hearts.

An attempt was now made by the sailors to abandon the ship by means of the boat which had been saved off Cauda. They contrived to lower it while pretending to prepare anchors to be let go from the prow. But St. Paul pointed out to the centurion that their presence was essential to the common safety, and the soldiers lost no time in cutting the boat's painter with their swords and letting her drift away in the darkness. Again in the moment of uncertainty St. Paul assures them that there shall not a hair of their heads perish, and having given thanks to God, persuades them to partake of the refreshment they sorely needed. After this the ship was lightened by throwing all that remained of the corn overboard.

When the day dawned, many anxious eyes were strained on the coast before them, but it was recognized by none on board. However, they saw a beach with a pebbly shore, which was exactly the spot on which to run a ship aground. It was decided to make the attempt, the anchors were cut away, the foresail hoisted, and they made for the shore. The ship actually struck on a kind of cape which projected from the beach, and began rapidly to go to pieces. The soldiers wished to kill the prisoners, but the centurion was determined to save St. Paul, and refused his sanction to this plan. The shore was not far away; some swam the distance, others floated on pieces of timber from the wreck; and

eventually the whole ship's complement found themselves safely on shore without the loss of a single life.

They had run aground on the north-eastern coast of Malta, in St. Paul's Bay, near to the island of Salmonetta, and as the season of navigation was passed, they were forced to winter here. The inhabitants of Malta at this time were a mixed race, partly of Phœnician origin, but they showed great hospitality to the shipwrecked party. St. Paul was to appear at Rome, so the viper which fastened on his arm did him no injury, but his reputation among the barbarians was assured. At first they thought him a murderer pursued by Justice, but afterwards credited him with divinity. During his stay in the island he healed the father of the chief man, Publius, and so enhanced his reputation.

When the seas were again open for navigation, the Apostle left Malta in an Alexandrian corn ship which had wintered at the island. It lay in the customary track of ships from Alexandria to Rome. Only when the winds were unfavourable did they adopt the course by Syria and the south of Asia Minor, which was followed by the ship into which the Apostle transhipped. The ship they took at Malta was called *The Twin Brethren* or *The Castor and Pollux*, and when they embarked, there were remarkable manifestations of the kindly feeling which the barbarians had conceived for their enforced guests.

A favouring breeze brought them after a run of a hundred miles to Syracuse, the famous city of

Sicily, specially memorable in the Apostle's life as being the first purely Western city which he beheld—that is, Western in the sense of being Roman as opposed to Greek. Up to this time his life had been spent entirely in the East, where even the Roman colonies had taken on some tint of their surroundings. The most celebrated citizen of Syracuse was Archimedes. The story of his flight through the streets calling "Eureka" (I have found it) in the excitement of some mathematical discovery has added a word to our language; while everybody is acquainted with the story of his absorption in mathematical problems while the Romans were besieging the city, and how he was at last cut down by a legionary in the city square while still intent on his diagrams. The city was well situated; the island of Ortygia, which closely approached the mainland and is now a peninsula formed a natural breakwater for the extensive harbour, while to the north rose the threatening mass of Mount Etna. Here, too, was the fountain of Arethusa, sung by Shelley, which gave rise to the celebrated Greek myth.

The next town the ship called at was Rhegium (now Reggio), on the shore of Italy and at the southern entrance of the famous straits of Messina. The wind was unfavourable, as is implied by the word translated in the Authorized Version "fetching a compass," and they had to lie up for a day at Rhegium waiting for a wind to take them through the straits. At last a south wind sprang up and

sail was set on the last section of the long journey. As the ship drew clear of the straits the smoke of Stromboli was visible away to the west. The next day the hundred and eighty miles between Rhegium and Puteoli were accomplished, and the ship rounded the promontory of Minerva and made her way into the Bay of Naples.

It was probably early in 59 that the Apostle's ship sailed into the Bay of Naples, and in the course of the same year the Bay was the scene of one of the most famous crimes in history. Twenty-five miles away, opposite Cape Minerva, which the ship was doubling, there lay Misenum, at the northern end of the vast amphitheatre which forms the Bay of Naples. It was not far from Puteoli, where St. Paul landed, and was the permanent station of the southern division of the Roman fleet. Anicetus, a freedman, was in command of the fleet at this time, and since Nero was casting about for means to be rid of his mother Agrippina, whose imperiousness had become intolerable, he suggested the expedient of a ship contrived in such a manner that it would fall to pieces when desired. The plan pleased the Emperor, who feigned a reconciliation with Agrippina, and invited her to celebrate their understanding. Nero received his mother with every sign of goodwill, and when the banquet was over conducted her with great pomp to the ship, which was decorated with the splendour which beseemed an Empress. It was a peaceful night and the waters of the Bay were calm when the ship started for Baiæ. When half

the journey was accomplished the machinery was set in operation, and to make doubly sure, the cabin in which the Empress was reclining was crushed by a heavy weight, which was allowed to fall on it. In spite of everything, Agrippina managed to reach a boat and get to shore, while a slave girl, who, in hope of rescue, called out that she was the Empress, was beaten to death by oars. The momentary escape was of little avail to Agrippina, for Anicetus pursued her to her villa and the thrust of a centurion's sword put an end to her life.

In the centre of this fair coast lay Mount Vesuvius, clad with vineyards and olives to the summit, a thing of beauty, Pompeii and Herculaneum nestling at its foot. There was no indication of the hideous ruin which was to devastate these cities twenty years later, when, it is worth noting, another admiral of the Misenum fleet, but a man of a very different stamp from Anicetus, perished in the overthrow—the elder Pliny, uncle of the Pliny who has left us the vivid account of the famous eruption. St. Paul's ship put in at Puteoli, which was some distance to the west of Neapolis or Newtown(Naples), which gives its name to the bay to-day. We are indebted to Pliny for the information that none but Alexandrian ships were allowed to sail into the Bay with all their sails set. Consequently, when *The Castor and Pollux* was sighted bearing up under full sail the tidings spread rapidly in Puteoli. A large crowd assembled to witness the arrival of the ship, perhaps the first to arrive from the south since the

winter ended. Puteoli was one of the two harbours through which passed the vast imports of the capital. It had extensive commercial relations with Alexandria and the East. It was certain that it would contain a considerable number of Jews in its population, and the Apostle was rejoiced to discover that there was also a Christian congregation. In this busy town St. Paul, with the acquiescence of Julius, spent a week in communion with the brethren, while news of his arrival was sent on to Rome.

When the week was ended the company of prisoners set out on the march of a hundred and fifty miles which lay between Puteoli and Rome. When the band and its military guard had traversed thirty miles they struck the Appian Way, the most celebrated of all the Roman roads, the highway between Rome and Brundusium, which was called the Royal Way. Horace has left a description of a journey to Brundusium along this Way; and the ceaseless traffic and the variety of human types encountered are presented in a lively fashion. The company of prisoners trudged steadily along, meeting many companies of far different appearance on the way.

The first deputation of Christians from the capital met the Apostle at Appii Forum, or the market of Appius. This was a celebrated stage on the Appian Way. For twenty miles the canal which drained the marshes ran here, and travellers were conveyed in boats drawn by mules. At the town of Appii Forum the mules were unhitched, and Horace gives a brisk

account of the riff-raff, muleteers, and tavern-keepers who infested the place. In such an unpromising locality the Apostle was first met by the Christians of Rome. They were some of the men he had written to three years before, though, until now, they had not seen his face. The older Christians met him at the Three Taverns, a town about ten miles nearer Rome. From this point the traffic became more congested, the splendid villas of the wealthy citizens were passed, habitations grew thicker, and they were soon in the suburbs of Rome. When they arrived in the city the centurion, according to a reading found in some manuscripts, handed his prisoners to the captain of the Prætorian Guard, who, at this time, was Burrus, one of the best of Nero's advisers.

XVI

ROME

THE dearest wish of the Apostle's heart had now been granted, but not at all in the way he desired. He was in Rome, but a prisoner. Nero was undoubtedly the most interesting figure in the capital at this time. He was the son of Agrippina, who had married the Emperor Claudius. The third wife of Claudius was the notorious Messalina, and on her death the palace freedmen, as Tacitus vividly describes, were greatly exercised as to the choice of a successor. Agrippina became Empress, although the marriage of an uncle and niece offered an affront to public opinion. Claudius was born to be ruled by women, and one of the first steps Agrippina took was to induce him to exclude his own son Britannicus from the succession in favour of her son by an earlier marriage, Domitius, who took the name of Nero. When, at the age of seventeen, Nero assumed the purple, he caused Britannicus to be murdered.

During the year in which the Apostle arrived in Rome, Nero's mind was occupied in devising schemes to procure the destruction of the mother who had made him Emperor. An imperious temper rendered her presence insupportable to her son, and we have already seen how the murder was accomplished.

But when his wishes were carried out Nero was seized with sudden panic. Stained with the guilt of matricide, he imagined that the soldiery would revolt and that the populace would regard him as accursed. He skulked about various parts of Italy, carefully avoiding Rome, until he was recalled by servile protestations of loyalty on the part of the people and the senate. Then began the shameful period of his career, when he appeared before the populace as a singer and charioteer, and dragged the purple in the mud.

There were two men at Rome who endeavoured to exercise some restraint on the degenerate Emperor, Burrus and Seneca. Burrus was the prefect of the Prætorians, that is, the Commander of the Imperial Guard. He was also charged with the custody of foreign prisoners on appeal, and was therefore probably the custodian of St. Paul, as is assumed in some manuscripts. He was a rough, uncultivated soldier, who had lost an arm in the wars, and was much more conversant with the use of the sword than the pen. From every point of view he was the antithesis of Seneca, the cultured philosopher and the man of the court. Yet the extremes met, and the man of the camp and the man of the study were thrown into the closest association in their endeavour to arrest the Emperor in the headlong course of dissipation along which he was hurried by his vice and vanity. But it was beyond the power of man to prevent his destruction. Burrus died in 61, the year of St. Paul's release;

the celebrated conflagration at Rome occurred in 64; Seneca, accused of complicity in a conspiracy against the Emperor, opened his veins in 65, perhaps in the same year that St. Paul died; and Nero brought his insane career to an end by committing suicide in 68.

There were also at Rome two of the judges before whom St. Paul had been tried in the provinces. Felix was there, a broken man, with nothing before him but the prospect of an obscure death. Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia, and brother of Seneca, could find no more worthy employment in Imperial days than to announce to the Roman populace the entertainments in which their mighty master deigned to exhibit himself to his subjects.

St. Paul was not confined to the precincts of the Prætorium, but was granted permission to hire a house in the vicinity of the barracks. But it must be remembered that he was not free from the presence of the soldier who guarded him, to whose left wrist the Apostle's right was chained. When Agrippa I. (Acts xii.) had undergone a similar incarceration at Rome twenty years before, his friends made interest with the prefect of the day to ensure that he should be guarded by soldiers as civilized and humane as could be found. Burrus was a man of penetration and great integrity. He may have become aware of the unique character of the Jew who was entrusted to his charge; in any case he would have no difficulty in convincing

himself that he was guiltless of anything which could properly be called a crime. He may, therefore, have taken care that the Apostle should be spared contact with legionaries who were degraded and brutalized. But probably St. Paul was not treated with any special consideration, and in any case the thought of the soldier of Christ was not for himself, but for the soldier who kept him. He tells the Philippians that it was known throughout the whole Prætorian guard that he was a prisoner for the sake of Christ (i. 13). In the Ephesian letter he takes his warder and uses his armour as an illustration of the Christian equipment for the spiritual warfare (vi. 10—20).

The Prætorium was the barracks of the Prætorian Guards, the household troops of Rome. These guardians of the Emperor were the spoiled children of the army. About nine years before, in the year 50, the parade ground before the camp, the Horse Guards parade of Rome, had witnessed the spectacle of a British king exposed to the wondering astonishment of the populace of Rome. For nine years Caractacus had defied the armies of Rome in the fastnesses of Wales. When he was at last captured and dispatched to Rome, Tacitus tells us that all Italy was aflame with curiosity to see the king who had so long maintained his independence against the armies of the Emperor. But neither the populace of Rome, nor the presence of Claudius and Agrippina, could quell the haughty spirit of Caractacus. He addressed the Emperor as an equal, and

the intrepidity of his speech and his dauntless demeanour, in which there was no sign of weakness due to his ruined fortunes, secured him his liberty. He died at Rome about 54.

St. Paul had not been installed more than three days in his new abode when he summoned the chief men in the Jewish community at Rome in order to make his position clear. He wished, above all, to explain that he had not been a free agent in the matter of the appeal, and that his action must not be interpreted as an accusation against his nation. He discovers that the Jewish community knew nothing whatever about the case, and that no dispatch relative to him had been received from Palestine. On the other hand, they had received many accounts of the new sect, and none in its favour. Everywhere it was denounced. They wished for more information about this widely-reprobated party, and St. Paul named a day on which the matter could be thoroughly discussed.

The account which St. Paul gives the Roman Jews of his experiences on his trial is worthy of careful attention. It will be seen that when the Roman authorities, knowing that he was innocent, desired to set him at liberty, the Jews protested. This was an exact reproduction of the events at our Lord's trial, with the difference that Festus, and not Pilate, was the procurator. But our Master did not possess the citizenship, and therefore was not invested with the right of appeal against the

sentence which was wrung from the unwilling procurator.

On the appointed day the Jews appeared at the Apostle's lodgings in great numbers. All day long St. Paul laboured to prove to his countrymen that what was written in the Law and the Prophets had been fulfilled in the life of Jesus of Nazareth. But he experienced the same opposition that he had frequently encountered before. They were not prepared to give up their religious views, sanctioned as they were by venerable antiquity and the support of authority, particularly since all that they were to be bartered for was some vague teaching about a Galilean peasant who professed to be the Messiah and had been executed by the Romans in some obscure and forgotten disturbance at Jerusalem. So, to the end, the Apostle adheres to his guiding principle, the Jew first. He dismisses the unbelieving portion of his audience with some words from Isaiah ringing in their ears, words which will never lose their force as applicable to a religious community which has become materialized by well-being and the enjoyment or abuse of authority, and has lost the vision of the mission which is its sole reason for existence.

Since his countrymen will not receive the Gospel, the Apostle announces that it will be preached to the other nationalities at Rome, and that they will hear. At this point the Book of the Acts concludes with the information that St. Paul continued to preach in his house for two years with the utmost

freedom. The words " no man forbidding him " are represented by one word in the Greek, a sonorous and dignified conclusion. This abrupt ending of the Acts is one of the greatest disappointments in the New Testament, and various theories have been framed to explain the probable reasons which led the historian to break off at the point where we should most ardently have wished him to continue. Did his accusers appear at Rome? Was St. Paul released or executed? Was the trial held before Nero in person, or did a deputy preside? All these questions and many others remain unanswered, and, as in the case of the nine months' stay in Greece, which St. Luke has passed by in a similar fashion, we are driven to construct the history from such notices as are to be found in the letters which the Apostle wrote from Rome. The most probable account of the failure of the Acts at this point is that St. Luke had formed the plan of creating a great trilogy dealing with the origin of Christianity. The Gospel brought the story down to the Resurrection. No more suitable halting place for the second member of the group could be conceived than the Apostle's arrival at Rome. The third book, dealing with the subsequent history of the Apostle and his death, if it was ever anything more than a project in the author's mind, has been entirely lost.

But when the matter is examined it will be found that the conclusion of the Acts is not so disappointing as it may at first sight appear. Even apart from

the supposition of a third volume, the present ending, when regarded from the proper point of view, will be found to be artistically and spiritually appropriate. We fall into the simple mistake of regarding the matter from our standpoint, whereas the question we ought to ask is what was the plan on which the author was working. There is not the slightest doubt that he could have given us an absorbingly interesting account of the Apostle's life at Rome, and, if he chanced to outlive him, could have told the story of his death. But such a narrative, although it would be priceless to us, did not fall in with the writer's purpose. The ground plan of the Acts may be stated in two words: Jew and Gentile, or Jerusalem and Rome. The book opens in the capital of one of the most backward countries of the Empire; at the end we find ourselves in the capital of the Empire itself. In the beginning of the book the New Religion appears merely as a sect of Judaism; at the end it has become the Religion of the Nations, a catholic religion, as broad and many-sided as the humanity it was intended to bless. The life of St. Paul was identified with this development, and it is this aspect of his life that the author of the Acts undertook to present. Regarded from this point of view, it will be seen that the Book of the Acts is built up upon a single idea, and that the proper conclusion of the history is not the death of the Apostle, but his arrival at the Imperial capital. So the book ends by emphasizing in its farewell words the two ideas which have been

prominent throughout: the incompatibility of the New Religion with the Old, and the fact that the New was to be a catholic religion, the religion of the nations.

But although St. Luke was obliged by his design to omit much that he knew, our position is very different, and we naturally ponder deeply on every expression in the Apostle's letters which can throw light on the circumstances of his captivity at Rome.

Four letters which he wrote from Rome have been preserved: Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon. From each of them we can gather some details about his life at Rome, but there is none that gives us so much information as the Philippians. In the first chapter we see that his Judaizing opponents were active in the capital, but that the Apostle is not disheartened by their campaign. His imprisonment has turned out to be for the progress of the Gospel, since the whole Prætorian Guard is aware that he is suffering for the sake of Christ. This information about the Apostle was spread among their comrades by the different men who were detailed to guard him. But it was not only in the Prætorium that interest about the Apostle and his Master had been excited. The greetings which he sends from Cæsar's (Nero's) household show that the Gospel of Christ had penetrated into the Palatium, from which every palace has since been named, where Poppæa was reigning in Imperial luxury, recking little of the brutal fate in store for

her (iv. 22). Truly the light was shining in dark places. We also learn from this letter that the Apostle allowed his Macedonian friends to contribute to his support at Rome. This is clear evidence of the friendly regard for the Apostle which prevailed at Philippi. Their gifts were brought by Epaphroditus, who fell dangerously ill at Rome (ii. 25—30). This is a service which the Apostle would never have permitted the Corinthian church to render. He repeatedly asserts his jealous determination to remain independent of the Christians of Achaia. "As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this glorying in the regions of Achaia" (2 Cor. xi. 10). But he reminds the Philippians that, in the earliest days, when he first preached Christianity to them, they had sent repeatedly to his assistance even before he had left Macedonia, while he was still at Thessalonica (iv. 15). But his Christian philosophy had taught him to meet the changing circumstances of life with equanimity. He possesses the secret of the initiated; he knows how both to abound and to be in want. Nevertheless, the kindly thought of the Philippians fell soothingly on the prisoner's heart.

Colossians, like Romans, is remarkable as a letter to a city which the Apostle had never visited; a circumstance to which he refers in ii. 1. Its importance, from our present point of view, consists in the list of names in the end. The reference to Onesimus in iv. 9, shows that he is a Colossian, and it is typical of the New Religion that it should be

a runaway slave who was selected to be one of the bearers of the letter to Colossæ. Three Jews are mentioned as being with the Apostle: Aristarchus, whom we have already met at Ephesus (Acts xix. 29); Mark, who seems to have become reconciled to the Apostle, to have joined him at Rome, and now to be starting on an expedition to Asia in the course of which he may visit Colossæ; and Jesus, with the Roman name of Justus, who is otherwise unknown. Among the Gentiles, Epaphras, another Colossian, is with the Apostle; Luke, his faithful companion, is at Rome; Archippus is mentioned again in Philemon. There is a reference to two Asian cities, Hierapolis and Laodicea, the latter of which is prominent at a later date in the Revelation (Rev. iii. 14—22).

The Epistle to the Ephesians throws little light on the Apostle's imprisonment, except that the soldier who guarded him furnished the idea of the Christian armour (vi. 12—18). Indeed, this letter probably bears an incorrect title. The words "in Ephesus" in the first verse are omitted by the best authorities. It may be the letter to the Laodiceans which is mentioned in Col. iv. 16.

The letter to Philemon is altogether delightful. Onesimus, his slave, had run away and drifted to Rome, where he met St. Paul. Becoming a Christian, he is sent back by the Apostle to his master "no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a brother beloved," bringing a letter, instinct with delicate tact, to bespeak for him a kind reception. The

Apostle hopes to be released soon, and hints that he may pay a visit to Colossæ ; if so, he will stay with Philemon (22), and the implication is that he will expect to see Onesimus restored to favour. A wonderful letter.

XVII

THE END

For the events of the Apostle's life after the imprisonment at Rome, we have to derive our information from the Pastoral Epistles, 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus. But many writers have denied that these letters were written by St. Paul, and hold that the captivity at Rome mentioned in the Acts was brought to an end, not by his release, but by his execution. Of course, if the Apostle were martyred during this imprisonment it would be impossible to maintain the genuineness of these Epistles, since there is no satisfactory method of fitting them into his earlier history as it is contained in the existing record. It would be idle to attempt to evade the force of the arguments which have been adduced by the writers who assail the authenticity of the Pastoral Letters. But it is possible to hold with a considerable degree of conviction that their conclusions are wider than is justified by their premises. It is perfectly true that these letters are strikingly unlike the other letters which are ascribed to St. Paul; that the vocabulary has altered; that there is a noticeable diminution in force; and that the organization of the congregations seems to have

matured with great rapidity. But it was a time of speedy growth; and the differences which are so perceptible are nothing more than might have been expected when it is remembered that the letters were written by a man of about seventy, whose creative powers had been exhausted by a life of wearing toil and anxiety.

There is, then, no imperious reason which compels us to depart from the traditional view that the Apostle's expectations of an early release were not falsified by the event, and that early in 61 he found himself free to depart from Rome in whatever direction he would. It was not far from the time when Boadicea fell swiftly on London, and terribly revenged her wrongs on the Romans. He thus escaped the outbreak of the fire in 64, and the subsequent persecution in which he would assuredly have been a victim had he been at Rome.

It is natural to suppose that he first turned his steps to the East and came to Asia Minor, where he fulfilled his promise of visiting Philemon in his home at Colossæ, and saw once more the slave Onesimus, whom he had rescued at Rome. He would also visit his favourite Macedonian congregation at Philippi (Phil. ii. 24). The tone of the letter to the Philippians reveals the feelings of friendly intimacy which existed between the Apostle and this assembly, a spirit of comradeship which must have made his visit resemble a homecoming.

There is an early tradition to the effect that St. Paul visited Spain. The words which gave birth

to it are found in an early Roman writer, who says that he came to the utmost bounds of the West. The idea that a journey to Britain is covered by this phrase has long been abandoned; but some writers see in them nothing more than a reference to his sojourn at Rome. However, this interpretation is entirely inadequate; the Apostle had long had before his mind the project of a visit to Spain (Romans xv. 24); and there is nothing improbable in the supposition that some of the time which intervened between the two imprisonments was occupied in carrying out this plan.

Coming to the period in which the Pastoral Epistles were written, we find the Apostle back again in Asia. The first letter to Timothy was written to that missionary to encourage him in the task of presiding over the congregation in the capital of Asia (1 Tim. i. 3). It is full of lamentable evidence that the forecast of a relapse which St. Paul made to the elders at Miletus (Acts xx.) had been rapidly fulfilled. False teachers without, and false brethren within, menaced the spiritual life of the assembly. In every chapter there is something which shows that the enthusiasm of the believers is growing cold, and we are not unprepared for the judgment which a later writer passes on Ephesus: "Thou hast left thy first love" (Rev. ii. 1-7). The Apostle wrote this letter on his way to Macedonia, where he did not intend to make a prolonged stay (i. 3; iii. 14).

The letter to Titus shows that St. Paul once again

visited Crete (Titus, i. 5). Titus, who is not once mentioned in the Acts, was left by the Apostle to regulate the affairs of the Christian congregations in that island. In an interesting remark we learn that St. Paul had found in Nicopolis a new centre for the propagation of the faith. Where there is now nothing but ruins, there existed in the Apostle's time a brilliant and notable city. Its name "city of victory" suggests its story. It was built by Augustus to commemorate the victory of Actium, won not far from this place, by which he became undisputed master of the Roman dominions. It will be remembered that by the battle of Philippi, Antony shattered the power of the republican party. He and Cleopatra for the future controlled the East from Alexandria. Octavian at Rome was master of the West. Gradually, but inevitably, they drifted into war, and at Actium in 31 B.C. the fortunes of Antony were ruined, while Octavian remained to become, as Augustus, at the age of thirty-two, the first Emperor of Rome. Nicopolis was founded by him as a memorial of the victory. Some of the most magnificent buildings in the city were erected by Herod the Great, who in this way not merely gratified his well-known taste for architecture, but endeavoured to obliterate the memory of his unfortunate choice, when, knowing little of the young man of the west, he had thrown in his lot with the experienced warrior Antony. Nicopolis was the capital of Epirus, which lay to the south of Illyricum, where the Apostle himself had intro-

duced Christianity at an earlier date (Rom. xv. 19).

In the second letter to Timothy, St. Paul is again a prisoner at Rome. Probably he had been arrested while passing the winter at Nicopolis, and immediately carried across the Adriatic to Italy. Short voyages such as this were quite possible in the winter. The circumstances of his captivity are altogether harsher. The attitude of the authorities to the Christians had completely changed since the fire which had destroyed about half the city. Nero was popularly credited with the authorship of the conflagration, and Tacitus, who is prepared to believe anything which is sufficiently bad about an Emperor, has transmitted this version of the affair to us. To divert suspicion from himself Nero fixed the responsibility for the crime on the Christians, and the Roman historian has described the tortures they suffered in a well-known passage.

During his first imprisonment none of the Apostle's friends was forbidden to visit him in his own apartments, but now it is only after a diligent search that Onesiphorus is able to discover the dungeon in which he is lodged (i. 16). He suffers hardship as a malefactor (ii. 9). It is perilous in the extreme to show the slightest sympathy with any member of the hated sect. Nobody but the Master stands by the Apostle's side on his first appearance before the court (iv. 16). The bitterness which the defection of his friends in the capital caused is increased by the news from the East:

"All that are in Asia are turned away from me." Onesiphorus was the one Ephesian who remained faithful; like Milton's Abdiel:

> "Faithful found
> Among the faithless, faithful only he."

But it is quite possible that the Apostle's words have been coloured by the depression which at times settled on his soul, and that we ought not to think of a general defection of the Ephesian church, but rather that some members of the assembly had exhibited a slackening of the affection on which the Apostle largely depended. A little thing would be sufficient to throw one in the Apostle's position into the depths.

St. Paul has no hope of release. He is prepared for the worst, and feels like a victim bound already to the altar. "I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come" (iv. 6). This splendid life goes out in eclipse. As the sun sinks, the western sky is not hung with purple and gold. Clouds and darkness settle on the scene. There was nothing to attract attention in his end. An execution was a very ordinary spectacle at Rome. His head was struck off with a sword. His citizenship saved him from the indignities which Tacitus has described; this was the last service it rendered him, and then he exchanged the Roman for a fuller measure of that other citizenship which he possessed, the Heavenly (Phil. iii. 20, R.V.).

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